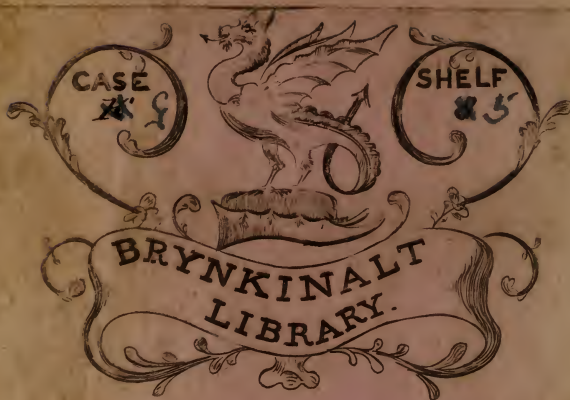
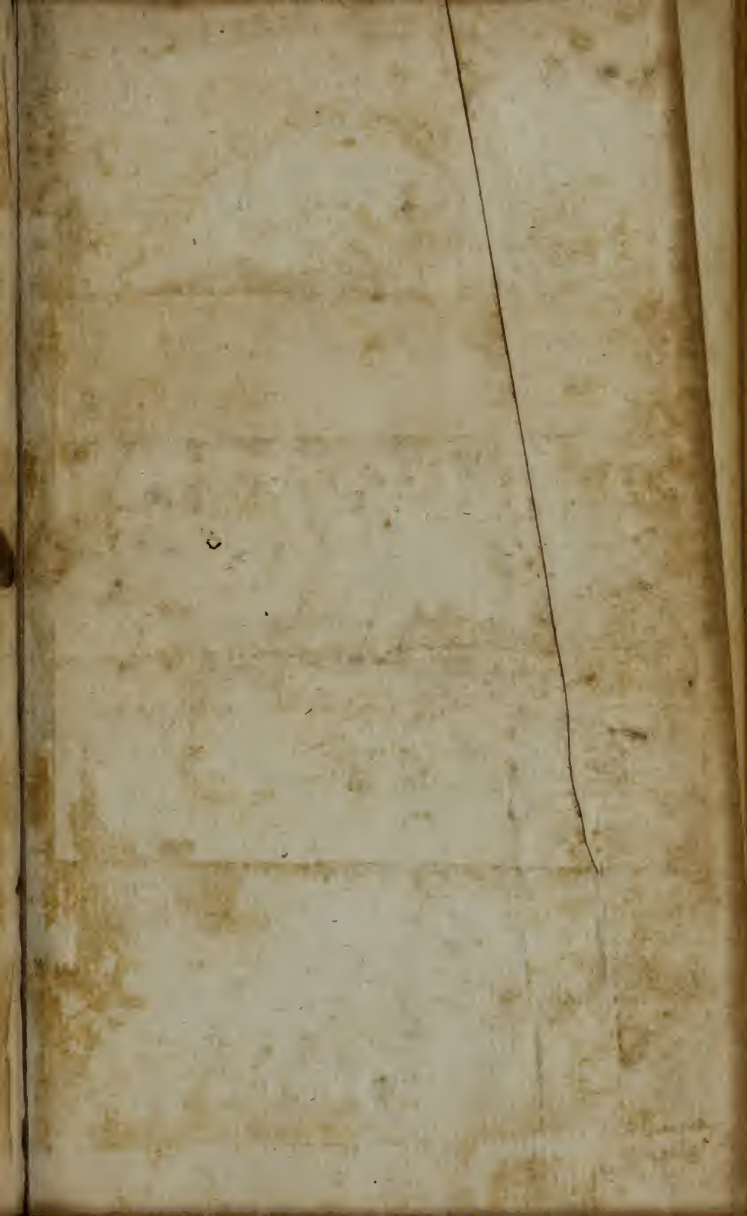


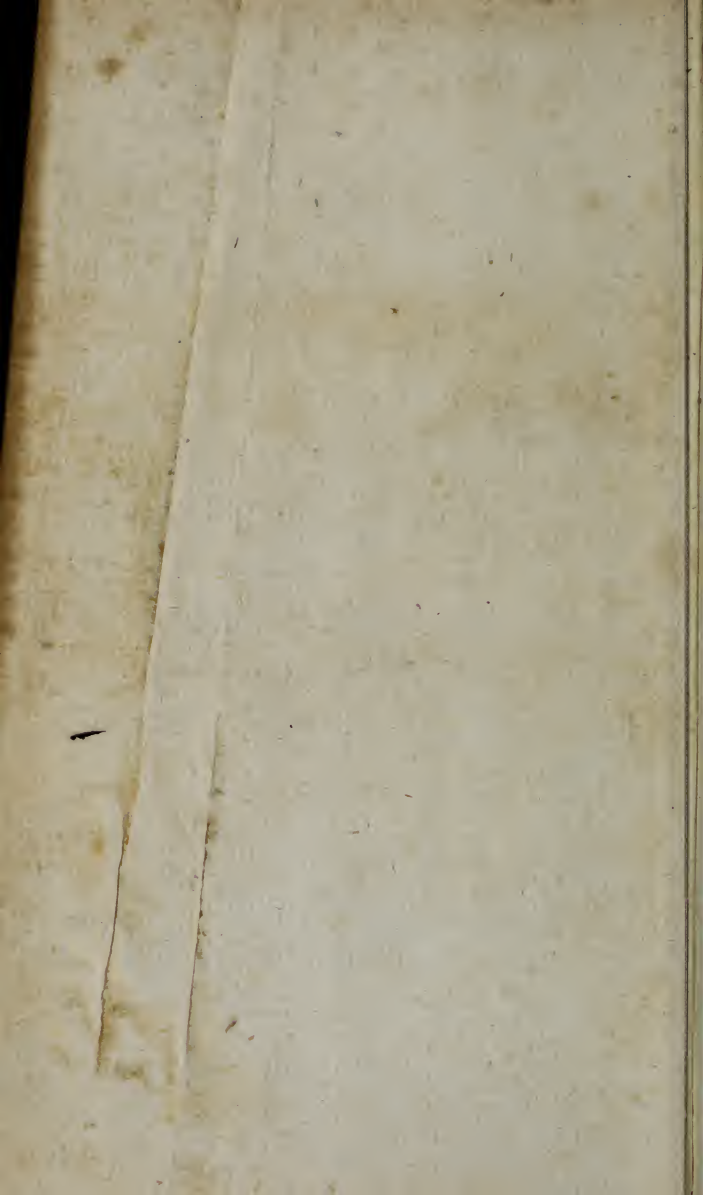


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JULIA DE GRAMONT,

BY

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LADY H\*\*\*\*.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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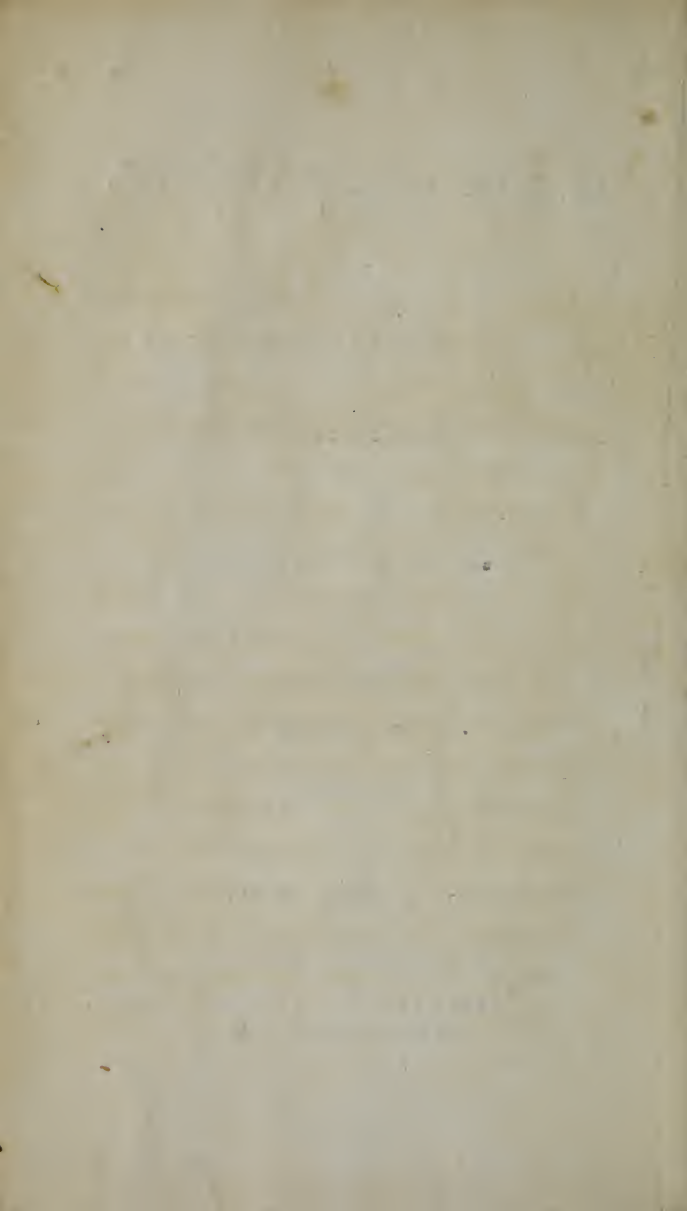
VOL. II.

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L O N D O N:

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FLEET-STREET. 1788.



## JULIA DE GRAMONT.

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LEONORA, by every art of winning gentleness and studious love, endeavoured to restore his long-lost happiness to her Augustus, who gratefully received each mark of her affection, and returned them by the most delicate attention to her wishes. He endeavoured to conceal his inquietude with the smiles of content; and banished to

the secret recesses of his heart the unextinguished embers of his fatal passion.

The Baron de Neuville felt for him a tenderneſs little inferior to parental ſentiments; and, unable to part with his darling Leonora, prevailed upon the Chevalier to promiſe a conſtant reſidence with him.

Several weeks had paſſed on in a ſcene of tranquillity, uninterrupted, when a courier from the Caſtle de Soiffons brought a moſt alarming ſummons to the Chevalier. A diſorder had attacked the Marquis, which, although its firſt ſymptoms had threatened no danger, yet had, in the courſe of a few days,

days, reduced him to the brink of the grave; and, being sensible of his approaching end, he wished to embrace Augustus once more before his eyes were closed for ever. What were the emotions of this amiable son! the thought of losing so invaluable a parent deeply touched his susceptible heart; and he delayed not a moment to obey the call of nature and of duty. Leonora, sharing the anguish of her lord, dissolved in tears, embraced her father, who reluctantly submitted to her accompanying the Chevalier on his mournful expedition.

They were met at the entrance of the Castle de Soissons by Ma-

dame de Tourville : her eyes were swollen with weeping. Upon the Chevalier's fearfully inquiring after the Marquis, " Alas!" replied she, " we must lose your admirable father ! the hand of death is on him : exert your utmost fortitude to support his last farewell. Convinced of his inevitable fate, but calm and recollected, he is anxious to bestow on you his parental blessing. Your brothers too are sent for to receive his generous pardon."

The sensibility of Augustus was too deeply affected to interrupt Madame de Tourville : he sunk in a window-seat, and yielded for some moments to the heart-rending anguish of filial regret and tenderness.

ness. An old grey-headed domestic, who was the Marquis's principal attendant, approached the Chevalier. The trace of sorrow marked his venerable countenance; unable to articulate, he bowed in silence; and, pointing to the door that led to his master's apartment, made signs to signify that he was expected there. Augustus arose, and, following his speechless guide, slowly advanced towards the awful chamber of impending death. Du Bois gently opened a door, and, preceding his steps, conducted him through the anti-room to that of this dying and lamented parent.

With what acute emotions was Augustus penetrated! The Mar-



quis, pale and emaciated, lay extended on a couch, for which he had exchanged his restless bed. The pillows beneath him were supported by the most expressive figure of genuine woe, in the form of Julia ! — her head reclined to rest the cheek of her expiring lord ; and, animated alone by the pearly dew of sensibility, her countenance might have been mistaken for the lifeless representation of sorrow in monumental marble.

The audible sobs of his afflicted son attracted the notice of this departing parent. He raised his closing eyes ; he fixed them benignly on the Chevalier, and extended one feeble hand to draw him

to

to his embrace — “ Oh, my excellent child !” he faintly uttered, “ thou art come ! and I shall die content. I have offered up my humble prayer for a sufficient interval of life and senses to fold thee to my heart, and to bless thee for the unremitted testimonies of thy filial duty !” — He paused, and seemed labouring to disclose some important truth ! The Chevalier, oppressed with the force of sorrow, could only answer with his tears, which bedewed the hand he gently clasped in his.

The Marquis at length resumed, “ Thy brothers ! — but, alas ! they have no claim to that endearing name ; nor blood nor friendship

“ have allied them to thee ! — for,  
 “ oh ! my beloved Augustus ! in  
 “ this awful moment, when fate  
 “ is going to separate us for ever ! —  
 “ though repugnant to my feel-  
 “ ings, I find myself impelled to  
 “ confess, in mitigation of thy  
 “ tender grief, — that, in regretting  
 “ my loss, thou wilt mourn a  
 “ friend, but not a father ! ” —  
 “ Ah, Sir ! ” — exclaimed the Che-  
 valier — “ what is it I hear ! —  
 “ vainly wouldest thou attempt to  
 “ deceive the strongest ties of na-  
 “ ture ! — my heart cannot disown  
 “ thee as a father ! — I feel I am  
 “ thy son ! — cast me not off — dis-  
 “ claim me not — oh, my respect-  
 “ able parent ! ”

“ Thou

“ Thou art my son ! ” returned  
 the Marquis (strongly moved) —  
 “ my dear, my adopted son ! but,  
 “ alas !—thy birth was not derived  
 “ from me ! — Heaven blessed me  
 “ not with such a son ! — oh, that  
 “ it had ! and that my name and  
 “ honours might have legally de-  
 “ scended to merit so approved !  
 “ but I have secured thy virtues  
 “ beyond the reach of envy and  
 “ revenge — I am enabled, without  
 “ injustice to my successors, to be-  
 “ queath thee a portion sufficient  
 “ to support the rank in which  
 “ thou hast been educated—mayest  
 “ thou live long, respected and  
 “ beloved ! — and may that power  
 “ supreme, who summons me from  
 “ hence,

“ hence, guard thee from ill, and  
 “ crown with uninterrupted happi-  
 “ ness thy nuptial state !

“ The Marchioness — that best  
 “ of women and of wives — is  
 “ my sole executrix — assisted by  
 “ the Count de Senanges, she  
 “ will do thee every justice. —  
 “ In this paper,” drawing a pac-  
 “ quet from his bosom, “ thou  
 “ wilt find the story which con-  
 “ cerns thy birth — neither time  
 “ nor strength will allow me to  
 “ enter myself upon so interesting  
 “ a detail — commend me to thy  
 “ Leonora, and share with her my  
 “ warmest blessings !”

At this moment the solemn scene  
 was suddenly interrupted by the  
 entrance of the physicians who at-  
 tended

tended the Marquis. — During the time that the astonished Chevalier was listening to a recital which deprived him of a parent, various were the emotions of Julia! — inadvertently, for one instant, her eyes met those of him to whom she was no longer mother! — and, for one intoxicating moment, the ecstasy of that thought overcame even the force of grief itself, and rendered them insensible to any other idea! — but the attention of the Marchioness to her dying lord, and those of Augustus to his generous benefactor, soon triumphed over this involuntary reflection. Exhausted with the exertion his spirits had undergone, the Marquis felt the hour  
of

of fate approaching — he took a tender and affecting leave of his beloved Julia, who was supported senseless from the scene of death! — This amiable man, who, in his days of health, had arranged every worldly circumstance, now raised all his pious thoughts from earth to heaven! — he requested the surrounding mourners to disperse, and to leave him during the last important moment with his confessor, in whose reverend arms he yielded up his guiltless soul without a sigh!

When this fatal event was known throughout the castle, an awful mute dejection reigned in every heart and countenance! — As the Marquis had lived beloved, so he died



ed lamented !—Madame de Tourville and Leonora tenderly watched over the Marchionefs, who felt all the force of undiffembled sorrow for a husband who had attached her to him by every grateful sentiment.

About an hour after the clofing fcene, the new Marquis, with his brother and the bride of the former, made their public entry into the caſtle ; their filial lamentations were but the mockery of woe — real unconcern was written in legible characters upon each countenance. The Marquis, who expected to be received by the widow of his father with the ſame infenfibility which compoſed his  
own

own unfeeling heart, sent her notice of his arrival, and that of the Marchioness de Soissons, requesting her appearance. Shocked at such an embassy, and incapable of complying with their summons, she entreated Madame de Tourville to descend to these haughty guests, and to inform them that in her present state of affliction retirement was her choice; but that her domestics should receive commands to pay them every due attention and respect during the time they proposed honouring the castle with their presence.—The proud Marquis reddened at this reply, and ironically said, he was obliged to Madame de Soissons for information

tion that himself and his family were visitors in that mansion, since he had, till that moment, been ignorant that he was not himself the master of it — “ However,” continued he, “ the testament of the deceased will decide with more propriety a dubious circumstance; tell then this fair inconsolable that, as her presence will be necessary at the opening of the will, I hope she will pay that respect to my father’s memory not to delay the ceremony later than this evening; since his commands, just or unjust, ought to be put into immediate execution.” During this feeling speech his haughty wife sat lolling in

in a chair with fullen dignity, without deigning to make the slightest inclination of the head to Madame de Tourville, though she surveyed her minutely with an imperious stare : that amiable woman, unabashed by a deportment which could only excite her contempt, eyed the Marchioness with such a look of perfect indifference, that she appeared sensibly mortified at her neglected consequence — however, she affected still a careless air — but the blush of wounded pride demonstrated that malice dictated her address to the Marquis in these words — “ Oh, my dear lord !  
 “ you must insist upon obtaining  
 “ for me an introduction — I am  
 “ absolutely

“ absolutely dying with impa-  
 “ tience, to pay my duty to our  
 “ beauteous mother, and to behold  
 “ those charms which had the  
 “ power to thaw the frozen heart  
 “ of age !—But tell her, Madam,  
 “ if you are honoured with the  
 “ confidence of this widowed fair,  
 “ she must not dim the lustre of  
 “ her eyes with tears — she must  
 “ reserve their beams to conquer  
 “ youthful slaves.”

A smile of disdain was all the  
 reply Madame de Tourville made ;  
 and she quitted the room in silence  
 just as the worthy ecclesiastic en-  
 tered, who had so recently closed  
 the eyes of the best of men. A  
 placid serenity, the result of a long

life of piety and devotion, marked his venerable aspect. He advanced, with unassuming dignity, towards the young Marquis, and thus accosted him : “ I come, Sir, to  
 “ fulfil the last commands of your  
 “ expiring father : he charged me  
 “ to transmit to you that benedic-  
 “ tion, and forgiveness, which the  
 “ sudden termination of his exist-  
 “ ence permitted him not person-  
 “ ally to bestow, upon yourself and  
 “ brother.” — “ For his blessing,  
 “ reverend father,” interrupted the Marquis, “ we are obliged, as to  
 “ his forgiveness, he reaps himself  
 “ that benefit ; it was an act requi-  
 “ site for a dying Christian, to quit  
 “ the world in charity with all  
 “ mankind ;

“ mankind ; nor could he other-  
 “ wise have a claim to perfect ab-  
 “ solution from his own sins and  
 “ errors.”

“ Errors,” replied the priest,  
 “ are inseparable from humanity ;  
 “ but the virtues of the exalted pat-  
 “ tern we have lost greatly over-  
 “ balanced those trivial failings,  
 “ which, in a contrary character,  
 “ increase with the vices of the  
 “ heart till they, unchecked, be-  
 “ come enormities ! — But the son  
 “ of such a father should inherit  
 “ his shining virtues with his splen-  
 “ did patrimony — should pursue  
 “ the bright example of conspi-  
 “ cuous merit—and, to be as great,  
 “ should learn to be as good !



Sullen rage deformed the visage of the Marquis.—“ And what  
 “ art thou,” he cried, “ who, with  
 “ officious zeal and insolent reproaches, presumest to arraign  
 “ my conduct, opposing to it the  
 “ panegyric of a father!—thy false  
 “ devotion is a cloak for every  
 “ crime that offers its temptation;  
 “ but never can impose on me. —  
 “ Away, and know thy reign is  
 “ ended — the ear that listened to  
 “ thy flattering blandishments is  
 “ closed—thy influence is no more;  
 “ but that thou art below revenge,  
 “ thou shouldest feel the weight of  
 “ my resentment.—Be gone, and  
 “ never let me see that hoary face  
 “ again.”

Unmoved,

Unmoved, the venerable father viewed the headstrong passion of impetuous youth! — he was armed with conscious rectitude and fearless innocence — he shook his silver head, and, with a countenance of divine composure, “ I go,” said he, “ and shall not fail to offer up  
 “ my humble prayers, that the all-  
 “ wise disposer of the sons of earth  
 “ may change thy heart—pour his  
 “ enlightening grace upon thee—  
 “ and restore thee to thyself.—  
 “ Farewell, my son!—mayest thou,  
 “ ere the night of age creeps on,  
 “ regain the path from which thou  
 “ hast unfortunately strayed, and,  
 “ ere too late, reform!”

He fixed an expressive look of pity on the Marquis, and left him in some degree confounded by the calm serenity he had failed to exasperate, and secretly ashamed of his illiberal treatment of a man whose blameless character and holy function demanded a contrary reception.

The afflicted Chevalier, who mourned the Marquis with all the tenderness of filial affection, had retired into his closet to vent an unfeigned agony of sorrow. The peculiar delicacy of his feelings and situation would not permit him to appear before the widowed Julia; but he had sent a respectful inquiry after her health, and had the consolation of hearing that she was recovered

recovered from that state of insensibility which had overwhelmed her senses during the last awful scene.

The grief of the Marchioness did not express itself in the ostentatious display of clamorous and artificial woe—it was tender—it was natural—it proceeded from a heart replete with sensibility, and warm with gratitude. She mourned, the truest friend and the most kind protector ; and shed to his memory the genuine tears of undisssembled and sincere regret.

Leonora, who, in compliance with the fervent entreaties of Augustus, had left him, though reluctantly, to the private indulgence of his sorrows, requested at length an

interview, with a voice of gentle earnestness. He answered not till she named the Marchioness, assuring him she came charged with her express commands. That sound was irresistible ; the fair petitioner obtained admittance, and urged a request from Julia, that he would, with Leonora, descend to the family party below, who were entitled to the due formalities of respect, and who might, in witnessing their real affliction, attempt to wear the mask of sorrow in a house where a parent's sacred remains were scarcely cold. Though the Chevalier, from various motives, wished to avoid the presence of those who had ever envied him,

even

even while supposed allied to him by nature, yet he made a painful effort to obey the Marchioness; and the arrival of the Count and Countess de Senanges inspired him with new resolution, and afforded him a sensible consolation. After the Count had paid a short and affecting visit to the beauteous relict of his lamented friend, he hastened to join the disconsolate Augustus. Having both mutually wept the fatal event which occasioned their present mournful meeting, they repaired to the eating hall, where they found this feeling family rising from table. With cold civility the Marquis received the Count and Chevalier; and, instead of condoling  
with

with them on the death of an invaluable parent, presented, in great formality; his bridal Marchioness; who, elated with her rank, and vain of fancied consequence, haughtily returned their distant salutes. When Leonora made her appearance, Madame de Soissons, with the freedom of conscious superiority, took her hand, and, affecting an air of condescension, thanked heaven that it had at last sent her a companion of her own sex: then, with a vivacity in her look and gesture, which would have better suited the scene of festivity than the house of death, she moved towards the gardens, requesting Leonora to conduct her round them;



them : — that fair afflicted, whose countenance partook of the sensibility of her heart, followed the Marchioness with reluctant steps ; and, rather guided than guiding, accompanied her into a parterre, where the depredations of destructive autumn seemed mournfully to proclaim the dying season, and the general loss.

Leonora was so absorbed by her own reflections, that she had advanced some paces before she recollected she was herself a total stranger at the castle of Soissons, having, upon the present sad occasion, made her first visit to its lamented owner. She was just going to impart this circumstance as an  
excuse

excuse for quitting the Marchioness, when a sudden shower of rain naturally relieved her from her employment. Madame de Soissons flew with rapidity to the castle, where, having arrived some moments before Leonora, she threw open a sash in the saloon, and stood enjoying, in a burst of unrestrained laughter, the inconveniencies her distanced companion suffered from the storm.

The widowed Marchioness, who, from the report of Madame de Tourville, felt an invincible repugnance to admit into her presence the unworthy sons of her lamented lord, entreated the Count de Senanges to dispense with her appearance

ance

ance during the solemn meeting in the evening, and to excuse her, under pretence of indisposition, from attending a ceremony which must, from many circumstances, aggravate her affliction, and might probably expose her to insults from those whom she would wish to respect for the sake of him who was their father. The Marchioness proceeded then, while a momentary blush traversed her languid cheek, to request the Count would make a public declaration before the Marquis, that Augustus was an adopted son, and that, though he no longer had a claim to the endearing name of brother, yet that the best of men and fathers, in re-  
 garding

garding his virtues with paternal tenderness, had equally distinguished him in his will. “ I know their  
 “ envy, I know their malice,” continued she ; “ they will attempt to  
 “ wound the delicacy of the Che-  
 “ valier, by disclaiming all future  
 “ connexion with him : — but tell  
 “ them, Count, his consequence  
 “ cannot be derived from their alli-  
 “ ance.”

As she spoke she fixed her sweet and dewy eyes upon the ground, to elude any penetrating look which the amiable Senanges, from a knowledge of her former sentiments, might have cast upon her. The possessions of the late Marquis being immense, he was empowered to indulge his generosity towards  
 his

his lovely widow, and adopted son, without injustice to his children. — But, notwithstanding the wealth which the two brothers inherited, their abject interested souls reproached, in bitter terms, the memory of a father ! Though the chateau de Soissons was less extensive and magnificent than the rest of his numerous houses, yet his illiberal successor openly upbraided the Marchioness for permitting her lord to bequeath it to her even for life. Little did he conceive the disinterested sentiments of Julia's soul. Having resolved to pass the first year of her widowhood either with her sister or at a convent, she made a voluntary resignation of  
this

this disputed mansion, which was, with a mean avidity, accepted. She acquainted him, through the Count, that, when every honour due to the memory of the Marquis was performed, it was her intention to retire with the Countess de Senanges, and to leave him at liberty to take possession of a place which had now no charms for her.

As Julia was determined to deposit the sacred remains of her husband among the monuments of his ancestors with funereal pomp, her departure was naturally retarded longer than the Marquis wished; but the forms of decency kept his impatience within proper bounds; and the satisfaction he felt  
in

in his approaching acquisition, made him conduct himself with tolerable decorum : he even checked his Marchioness for frequently expressing her ennui at the tedious solemnity of the mournful scenery : the dismal drapery of death — its gloomy tapers—and its silent horrors—were ill adapted to the levity of her disposition. She endeavoured to divert the lingering hours in the society of Leonora, who herself began to find affliction irksome, and to wish for an opportunity of partaking in those public amusements, described by her new companion in alluring colours.

Though the Marchioness at first sight seemed devoid of every grace,



and prepossessed Leonora with no very favourable sentiments, yet she was so far mistress of the wiles of dissimulation, that where she wished to please she could be dangerously insinuating: fatally for her young and inexperienced friend, she by imperceptible degrees gained a powerful influence over her mind. Leonora grew weary of offering rejected consolation to a disconsolate husband, who shunned her presence, and, seeking solitude, left her at liberty to converse with those who were qualified only to vitiate a weak and inconsiderate heart.

In the apartments of the widowed Marchioness there reigned a still solemnity, unsuitable to the gaiety  
of

of Leonora : and when, infected by a momentary impulse, she appeared before her new preceptress with a dejected countenance, she was received with ironical smiles, accompanied by an interrogation, whether she was really become the dupe of artificial sorrow—and if she could rationally believe that so young and beautiful a widow was sincere in regretting the dissolution of an union so very unequal ? The volatile Leonora gave easy access to these artful insinuations, and began to form a less perfect idea of that character she had hitherto regarded in the highest point of view ; nor did she blush to accuse the innocent and virtuous Julia of affecting the parade

of grief, while her heart secretly rejoiced at liberty regained. Madame de Senanges, to whose friendship the ungrateful Leonora owed the hand of Augustus, became totally neglected by her : she dreaded her just reproaches, and consciously avoided the silent censures of her awful eyes. Madame de Tourville's serious turn of mind (the effect only of her misfortunes) was peculiarly repugnant to Leonora's disposition, and she considered her gentle admonitions as the formal precepts of advancing age.—Thus was the artful Marchioness the chosen and dangerous companion of her social hours : the Marquis and his brother likewise paid her flattering attentions ;

tentions ; her musical talents rendered her a most agreeable addition to their present contracted circle ; and her uncommon beauty captivated the eye, while her soft harmony charmed the ear.

The strange discovery of the dying Marquis had increased the misery of Augustus, and revived the smothered flame of unextinguished love !—He found himself released from one fatal barrier to his hopes, only to shew the remaining obstacle in a still stronger light : while he considered Julia as united to a father, he submitted with some degree of resignation to his fate ; but the recent disavowal of that filial tie awakened him to a more poignant

sense of anguish ;—from being in different to Leonora, he began to view her with eyes of aversion, and with a mortifying coldness rejected her attentions. So absorbed was he in the contemplation of his wayward fate, that he was quite regardless of the paper to which the Marquis had referred him ; and, totally incurious about the circumstances relative to his birth, he had carelessly thrown it into a cabinet, where it remained unopened.

Pride had some share in this extraordinary negligence. Dreading that obscure connexions might prove him unworthy of adoring his beloved Julia, and of the hopes to which he had once aspired, he dared  
not

not to dive into the mystery of his extraction. Madame de Tourville, whose friendship for Augustus was warm and sincere, would sometimes rally him on his inattention. At length, tired with her importunities, he one day resigned the paper into her hands, assuring her that his firm reliance on her fidelity gained her this confidence; he concluded by conjuring her that, if she found his birth ignoble, she would be silent even to him, and return the manuscript sealed up, as she received it: — that, in such a case, ignorance was his choice; and, not wishing to know the peculiar circumstances of his disgrace, he was resolved to hide in some foreign kingdom his

degraded head. Madame de Tourville smiled at his eagerness ; “ Ah !  
 “ rest assured,” she said, “ a haughty  
 “ soul like yours is sprung from no-  
 “ ble blood.” — “ If it should be  
 “ otherwise,” replied he with emo-  
 “ tion, as you value my honour and  
 “ my peace of mind, inform not the  
 “ adored idol of my heart that the  
 “ man, who was once distinguished  
 “ by her preference, is become an  
 “ object unworthy of her !” — “ Re-  
 “ member,” returned Madame de  
 Tourville gravely, “ that this idol  
 “ of your heart is, or ought to be,  
 “ your wife ; and she is too tenderly  
 “ attached, to suffer birth or ex-  
 “ traction to influence her senti-  
 “ ments.”



“ments.” Augustus was prevented from making a reply by the entrance of the new Marchioness with Leonora; when, having paid some cold civilities to them, he withdrew to ruminate upon his extraordinary situation. Madame de Tourville retired to her closet, where she had cautiously deposited the manuscript, determined not to examine its contents till after the interment of the Marquis.

The lovely Julia remained constantly in her apartment; nor could she be persuaded to dissipate her sorrow by mixing with the family circle: she dreaded, more than ever, encountering the Chevalier. The disclosure of his birth yielded her

her a secret consolation ; but, while it seemed to render her attachment less guilty, her delicacy of sentiment suffered her not to admit the most distant hope of ever being united to Augustus.

The evening before the funeral obsequies were to be performed, a melancholy impulse led her to take a last farewell of her lord's cold remains. She found an opportunity, when the Countess and Madame de Tourville were absent, (who she thought might have opposed her design) to steal from her apartment ; and, directed by the glimmering tapers which, with sad solemnity, illumined the castle, she  
approached

approached the awful chamber of eternal sleep.

Augustus, from the same sympathy of grateful affection, at an opposite door was entering the room where, enclosed within his last habitation, reposed the lifeless Marquis.—The attendants, who perceived the Marchioness advance, respectfully withdrew into the antichamber.

The Chevalier, with trembling emotion, beheld the beauteous widow move ; and, fascinated to the spot, stood, transfixed, to gaze upon her more than mortal loveliness!—her sable robe flowed with unstudied elegance, which added graces to her inimitable form.

As

As she approached the coffin her countenance was awfully distressed: she fixed upon the serene and lifeless features of her lord a look of animated woe; then, melting into tears, she thus addressed him —

“ Dear, sacred relics of the most  
 “ esteemed of men, adieu! — and,  
 “ if thy hovering spirit can from  
 “ its blest abode look down upon  
 “ the unfortunate Julia—let it wit-  
 “ ness the sacred vow she breathes.  
 “ True to thy honoured, thy re-  
 “ spected memory, never shall this  
 “ widowed hand —” At that in-  
 stant the frantic Chevalier, rushing  
 forward, sunk at the feet of the  
 astonished Marchioness. — “ Oh,  
 “ cruel, faithless Julia!” he ex-  
 claimed;

claimed; “ is it thus that thou  
 “ wouldest keep those vows in-  
 “ violate, which promised once to  
 “ the despised Augustus ecstastic  
 “ happiness! — Ah, since fate no  
 “ more imposes, by parental claims,  
 “ the reluctant silence of a love  
 “ like mine, would that seraphic  
 “ tongue pronounce a vow irrevocable!” — “ How, Chevalier!” interrupted the Marchioness, freeing herself, with difficulty, from the grasp of her distracted lover, and recoiling precipitately — “ is this a scene — is that an object — for such unhallowed converse! — and dares the ungrateful Augustus insult the sacred silence of that honoured

“noured corse with the rash ve-  
 “hemence of an impious passion !  
 “— Leave me — fly me — and, in  
 “the presence of an injured wife,  
 “repent thy guilty frenzy!”

She turned from him; and, while the awful dignity of offended virtue beamed in the radiance of her eyes, she darted a glance of such piercing reproof upon the kneeling Chevalier, that he remained on the ground without the power of suing her forgiveness, or opposing her departure. — As she withdrew he gazed after her till she vanished from his sight.

He then suddenly started up, and exclaimed — “ Oh, she is gone !  
 “and thou, wretched Augustus! art  
 “become,

“ become, through thy own un-  
 “ governable folly, the object of  
 “ abhorrence and contempt!—con-  
 “ tempt from Julia!—Ah! thought  
 “ intolerable!—but” (lowering his  
 voice) “ let me check these tran-  
 “ sports; complaints are profan-  
 “ ation here.” With folded arms  
 he stood for some moments, con-  
 templating the clay-cold Marquis:  
 death had not divested his benign  
 features of the placid smile that  
 animated his living countenance—  
 “ Oh, blest repose!” softly uttered  
 Augustus—“ happy state of endless  
 “ peace! —freed from the cares of  
 “ existence, thy faultless soul is  
 “ flown to that land where sorrows  
 “ are no more! —there to receive  
 “ the



“ the glorious crown of virtue ! —  
 “ while I, thy miserable adopted  
 “ son, am left a prey to wretched-  
 “ ness and scorn ! ” — He turned away,  
 heaved from the bottom of his  
 heart a sigh profound, and bent  
 his steps to his apartment. When  
 the Marchioness had reached her  
 sofa she sunk upon it, and burst  
 into an agony of tears ! — a lover,  
 whom she still adored, recurred to her  
 imagination, kneeling at her feet.  
 Enough had she sacrificed to duty  
 and to honour in the sharp rebuke  
 with which she quitted him — her  
 tenderness revived, and she now  
 became more acutely sensible that  
 the Chevalier was yet possessor of  
 her heart.

“ Ah,

“ Ah, loved Augustus !” she softly  
 exclaimed, “ why does thy dear  
 “ idea haunt my guilty mind —  
 “ why, in this awful hour, when  
 “ gratitude demands each tear as  
 “ tributes due to a revered, a gene-  
 “ rous husband—why do they flow  
 “ for thee ?—lost ! —unworthy Ju-  
 “ lia ! —extract this fatal passion  
 “ from thy bosom, or die in the at-  
 “ tempt !” —The Countess de Se-  
 nanges entered at this period: she  
 had missed, and sought her sister;  
 had traced her to the scene of deco-  
 rated woe, and found her now dis-  
 solved in tears.—“ Ah, my Julia !”  
 she cried, “ wherefore did you elude  
 “ my vigilance to seek a spot which  
 “ offered to your view a spectacle  
 VOL. II. E “ of

“ of sadness!”—Forgive me, oh my  
 “ Henrietta,” replied the beauteous  
 mourner, — “ I shall offend your  
 “ tenderness no more.—I have bade  
 “ a long and last adieu to him, whose  
 “ virtues must ever survive in my  
 “ remembrance—It was a debt in-  
 “ cumbent on my gratitude, and  
 “ the performance of it has eased  
 “ me of a weight of care. — To-  
 “ morrow he will be borne for  
 “ ever from my sight, and in the  
 “ cold enclosure of a tomb for ages  
 “ rest!”

The succeeding day, with mourn-  
 ful solemnity, the slow procession  
 moved; and the lamented Mar-  
 quis was deposited among his an-  
 cestors.

The

The cries of poverty, the sighs of the afflicted, the groans of the oppressed, his bounty had relieved, followed to the tomb these loved remains! — they mourned their patron, their protector, friend! — His sad domestics drooped their heads; and, with silent grief, supported to his grave their much regretted master, whose character was written in the tears of every eye: and his fame resounded by that only enviable panegyric — the sympathetic sorrow of each feeling heart! —

The departure of the Marchioness from the castle de Soissons was fixed for the day succeeding that of the funeral obsequies. The Count de Senanges, whom his

sister had intrusted to examine the private cabinets of the late Marquis, amongst various trinkets found a small casket sealed, and addressed to Augustus. He instantly sought his friend, and found him walking pensively on the terrace: the Count presented him with the casket; — with incurious eyes he viewed it, sighed, and carelessly placed it in his bosom. — “Whence comes it, Chevalier,” said his friend, “that you discover so much indifference relative to your birth?” — “It arises,” replied he mournfully, “from my indifference to life: am I not an outcast? reared by the hand of charity, unconnected with the world —

“ world — lost to happiness — the  
 “ victim of despair ! — I would be  
 “ for ever ignorant of an origin  
 “ which exposed to the shafts of  
 “ fortune a very wretch indeed ! ”  
 “ You are to blame,” replied the  
 Count ; “ whatever may be your  
 “ descent, respectable by educa-  
 “ tion, exalted by native worth,  
 “ and distinguished by fortune —  
 “ you owe to the lovely woman  
 “ who has united her fate to yours,  
 “ as well as to yourself, a disco-  
 “ very so important.” — “ Aye,  
 “ there’s my sting,” returned the  
 Chevalier with a look of distraction,  
 “ that syren has undone me : but  
 “ for her, what ecstatic hopes  
 “ might I not now have formed !

“ Ah, no ; presumptuous wretch !  
 “ would thy offered, thy ignoble  
 “ hand, have been accepted by that  
 “ Julia, whose illustrious birth,  
 “ and honourable blood, should  
 “ scorn thy vows, and spurn thy  
 “ base alliance.” He walked a  
 few paces from the Count in the  
 strongest agitation ; then approach-  
 ing him again, and softening his  
 accent —“ Forgive, my more than  
 “ brother, the wildness of despair :  
 “ I cannot be ungrateful to thy  
 “ friendship ;—if then thy faithful  
 “ affection yet finds an interest in  
 “ my unfortunate destiny, Ma-  
 “ dame de Tourville can inform  
 “ you all my story : in her hand  
 “ I placed the important manu-  
 “ script.—



“ script.—Go then, my dear Se-  
 “ nanges, learn from that fatal  
 “ paper a secret of which I would  
 “ be ever ignorant.” —The blush  
 of native pride and conscious dig-  
 nity glowed on his cheek; he  
 hastily turned from the Count, who  
 quitted him to go in pursuit of  
 Madame de Tourville. He found  
 her in the pavilion with Leonora,  
 to whom she had been mildly re-  
 presenting some improprieties in  
 her late conduct, to which she was  
 endeavouring to attribute the sud-  
 den coldness and reserve which she  
 complained of in her husband. —  
 “ Your judgment, Madam,” said  
 she haughtily, as the Count ap-  
 proached, “ is totally indifferent

“ to me; I neither seek your ap-  
 “ probation nor dread your cen-  
 “ sures — I stand not in need of  
 “ your advice to learn the duties  
 “ of a wife. — Rest contented with  
 “ your boasted influence over the  
 “ Marchioness and Countess, nor  
 “ presume to comment upon my  
 “ conduct with such insulting free-  
 “ dom.” She quitted the temple,  
 darting a look of fury upon  
 Madame de Tourville, and of  
 disdain upon the Count, as she  
 passed : she then directed her steps  
 to the dressing - room of the  
 new Marchioness, where they both  
 turned into ridicule the friend-  
 ly admonitions of the amiable  
 Tourville. That imperious wo-  
 man had, by flattery and dissimu-  
 lation,

lation; gained a perfect ascendancy over Leonora ; to vitiate whose innocence of manners was her cruel aim, that she might reduce her to a level with herself : and so devoid was she of each virtuous sentiment, that she used every argument to withdraw her affections from her once loved husband, maliciously urging the deception of his birth as a motive for resentment.

The brother of the Marquis, now the only Chevalier de Soissons, had been struck with the beauty of Leonora ; and, dissolute in his principles, was capable of attempting the heart of her who was united, by the most solemn vows, to his adopted brother. — Too well he succeeded

succeeded in the base design ! Leonora, stung with the cold indifference of her lord, sought in the attentions of the Chevalier to forget her wrongs ; and found, too late, that Henry de Soissons was better formed to charm her affections than the wedded Augustus.—The new Marchioness was the confidante of the Chevalier ; and, envying the fortune bequeathed to Augustus, exercised her revenge, by the most ungenerous attempt to wound his peace and honour in the seduction of his wife's affections.—She was hourly painting to Leonora the passion and admiration of Henry—at the same time artfully reminding her of the neglects  
and

and coldness of a husband.—Leonora was endowed with a share of vanity equal to her beauty—it was wounded by indifference—it was flattered by attention.—Henry de Soissons was handsome and insinuating—Leonora possessed a heart easily impressed, and naturally inconstant. She was distant from the precepts of a father—the retirement of the Marchioness and Countess deprived her of their once valued example. At first her virtue started at its danger, but she wanted resolution to withstand the allurements of sighs and protestations; and, depending too much on her own power and the innocence of her intentions, she suffered herself

herself to listen to the syren voice of an imprudent love.

When the Count de Senanges found himself alone with Madame de Tourville, after having touched, with regret, upon the changed conduct of Leonora, he entered upon the subject relative to the mysterious birth of his friend. Madame de Tourville presenting to him the manuscript—" It was for this purpose," said she, " that I retired  
 " hither when I was interrupted by  
 " the fair wife of its hero, and was  
 " induced, from the strong impulse of friendship, to offer admonitions unwelcome to the ear  
 " of youth and beauty.—Since you  
 " have obtained permission to share  
 " with

“ with me the contents of this paper, let me request you to open it and read.”—The Count, with agitation, broke the seal, and began the following relation.—

#### THE MANUSCRIPT.

Returning home one evening from a visit in the vicinity of Versailles, my carriage suddenly stopped.—Inquiring into the cause, I observed one of my attendants holding up an osier basket, which he inspected with some surprise.—I began to interrogate the servants; when the complaints of an infant instantly informed me what were its contents.—Du Bois drew near, and offered to my view a beauteous boy!—



boy! — it was drest with elegance, and its waist encircled by a ribband, from which hung a golden coral, ornamented with jewels, and distinguished by the initials of two letters in a cypher. — The bewailings of this little creature — its looks of helpless innocence — affected me with compassion and tenderness. — I took it in my arms, determined to be its protector till I could restore it to those of a parent, who seemed to have exposed it to receive, from the benevolence of strangers, that shelter which it was unhappily denied under a paternal roof. I considered for a few moments what measure to take for the preservation

ation of this little foundling. — It appeared to be of the same age as my youngest son, who was only a week old; and I resolved to place it in the care of the very nurse who was to take the charge of my young Augustus. The Marchioness was too indifferent a mother to permit the nursing of her children under her own eye; — at the end of a month she always banished them her sight; and, from an obstinate prepossession that a cottage would harden their constitution and ensure their health, she suffered them to remain, without any attention on her part, in the rural habitation of an elderly woman, who resigned them the second year to the care  
of

of a superior order of domesticks at home. — I endeavoured to remedy her neglect by constantly visiting myself my beloved infants, whom I had the satisfaction of seeing bloom and thrive under their nurse's care. — I ordered my carriage to drive immediately to the abode of this worthy woman, who joyfully undertook the charge committed to her.

Fearful that the child might not have been baptized, I named it myself Lewis Augustus, and desired the nurse would bestow equal care upon it as she would upon my new-born son, who was in three weeks to be committed to her care. She soon lulled the plaintive innocent

nocent to rest, when she had satisfied with food its clamorous hunger, and I left it in her arms, having first taken from its waist the coral, by which I hoped one day to trace its birth. The succeeding day I paid a visit to the Count de Polan; and, upon my return to Paris, was shocked to receive information that my infant son was dangerously ill; and that the Marchioness, upon the first symptoms of indisposition, had sent him into the country, not doubting but that salutary air would infallibly restore him. I delayed not a moment to visit my poor child; and had the misfortune to find, upon my entering the cottage, by the excla-

mations and tears of the nurse, that it was no more ! — I felt the stroke with all a father's tendernefs ; but, endeavouring to affume the refolution of a Chriftian, I fubmitted with humble refignation to the irrevocable decree of heaven. The young Auguftus was repofing in a cradle ; it fmiled upon me with angelic innocence, and infpired me with the moft interefting pity. A thought darted into my mind to adopt this little foundling ; and, notwithstanding my natural abhorrence to every fpecies of deception, yet, in the prefent cafe, it appeared not only guiltlefs but laudable. I confidered that, by acknowledging him for my own fon, he would

efcape

escape the indignities and mortifications to which a state of dependance is too often exposed from an unfeeling world : quieting therefore every scruple by the justification of a self-approving conscience, I imparted to the nurse my plan : — I gave her a strict command never to divulge the death of my son upon any account whatever, but to assist me in concealing it from the Marchioness, who, I urged, might naturally be induced, in the first emotions of her grief, to accuse her of negligence, and might even carry the warmth of her resentment so far as to cease being her friend.

The poor woman embraced the proposal with transports of gratitude; and, as my sanction absolved her from the commission of a crime in this deceit, she solemnly promised that no authority but mine should ever extort the secret. Fortunately none of the good woman's family were at home when the dear infant expired; and she found no difficulty in imposing upon them a deception they would never suspect. She dressed the fictitious Augustus de Soissons in the vestments of my departed child, and declared the foundling to be suddenly carried off by a convulsion.

It was several weeks before my wife expressed the smallest inclination



ation to see her infant, fatisfied with hearing of its recovery and health : she found no time, from a continual fucceffion of amusements, to beftow upon maternal claims. She never had the moft diftant fufpicion of the deceit ; and, the old woman dying about a twelvemonth afterwards, the feeret remained locked in my own bofom.

The young Auguftus difcovered, as his years increafed, a difpofition which promifed to repay my utmoft tendernefs. A ftrong genius for fcience and the polite arts were eafily difcoverable ; I faw, with delight, thofe noble qualities of foul which befpoke the maturer virtues of his future character. With fighs

profound I made the sad comparison between his supposed brothers and himself; and dreaded nothing more than the misfortune of beholding this amiable and accomplished youth snatched from my arms by the real claims of parentage. Never could I persuade myself to acknowledge, even to him, that I stood in no relationship to him but that of a friend. Considering him as the boast and ornament of my family, I could not support the idea of voluntarily relinquishing such a treasure.

Thus have I deferred to the awful hour of death an avowal so painful, so important!—and could I, without injustice, still conceal the  
secret,

secret, I would quit the world the supposed and envied father of such a son ; but as I might, by an action so interested, deprive an illustrious family of its greatest honour, and himself, perhaps, of a more exalted fortune, I yield, though reluctantly, those pretensions to his alliance, to which I have, alas ! no natural right.

And now, my beloved Augustus, since this paper will not be perused by thee till thou hast lost for ever that imagined father who has watched over thy infancy, and reared thy blooming youth — need I express a hope that thou wilt bear a tender remembrance of his affection ? — thy natural parents, if they

yet exist, cannot have a fonder interest in thy welfare ; thy dutiful attentions to me have been exemplary : — mayest thou in thy descendants experience that comfort I have found in thee. Persevere in the path of virtue and of honour — and may thy happiness be equal to thy merits!

In one of my cabinets is a casket carefully sealed up, which will be delivered after my decease. It contains the coral, which may one day assist and confirm the discovery of thy birth. Farewell for ever !

HENRY AUGUSTUS,

Marquis de Soissons.

When

When the Count had concluded the narrative, he found himself still as ignorant as ever in regard to the real birth of his friend. Madame de Tourville, who had appeared uncommonly agitated during the recital, demanded of the Count, with visible emotion, whether the coral had been produced? — He informed her that Augustus was in possession of it, having received it from his hands that morning. — “Fly then, my dear Count,” said she, starting up; “a strange presentiment has seized my heart! Oh! if that coral bears the cypher of A. T. and is ornamented with a wreath of emeralds and brilliants, his unfortunate

“ nate

“ nate father was not unknown to  
 “ me.” — Monsieur de Senanges  
 casting upon her an inquisitive look  
 of astonishment—“ Interrogate me  
 “ not,” she cried; “ suspense must  
 “ still keep me silent; a thousand  
 “ tender and affecting ideas crowd  
 “ into my imagination; alternate  
 “ hopes and fears distract me:—  
 “ hasten to your friend, procure  
 “ the sacred relic of his birth:—if  
 “ it confirms the strong prepos-  
 “ session of my mind, Augustus,  
 “ though the injured pledge of an  
 “ unhappy union, springs from the  
 “ noblest blood of France.” Urged  
 by the curiosity of impatient friend-  
 ship, Monsieur de Senanges flew  
 towards the castle; and fortunately  
 meeting

meeting the object of his search,  
 “ Come, my friend,” he cried,  
 “ accompany me to the pavilion—  
 “ produce the ~~casket~~ <sup>case</sup>—upon this  
 “ hour depends a discovery of the  
 “ utmost importance !”—The ex-  
 pression of the Count’s features,  
 and his evident emotion, convinced  
 the Chevalier that Senanges was be-  
 come the master of his secret.—  
 “ Am I,” interrupted he with an  
 air of dignity, “ descended from  
 “ a race equal to my soaring, my  
 “ ambitious mind? — or, from an  
 “ ignoble birth, do you pronounce  
 “ me unworthy of my education,  
 “ and beneath your friendship? —  
 “ Speak—complete my wretched-  
 “ ness, and let me fly from a world  
 “ which



“ which sports with my misfor-  
 “ tunes!”—“ Banish such ill found-  
 “ ed doubts,” returned the Count—  
 “ follow my steps, and learn not  
 “ to distrust that Providence which  
 “ is the surest guardian of unble-  
 “ mished virtue.”—With a coun-  
 tenance of unconvinced suspicion  
 the impetuous Augustus followed  
 the steps of his anxious guide, into  
 whose hands he had reluctantly  
 yielded the casket.

Madame de Tourville met the  
 Count at the entrance of the tem-  
 ple; trembling impatience agitated  
 every nerve—she grasped the box—  
 broke open the seals—unclasped  
 the case—discovered the coral—  
 and

and fainted in the Count's extended arms.

Augustus arrived at this instant ! Every selfish consideration vanished from his mind, and his whole attention was engaged in assisting her recovery.—She unclosed her eyes, and feebly exclaimed—“ My son ! “ My son ! ”—The Chevalier supported her on one knee—she perceived him—and, folding him to her bosom, thus continued — “ Oh, gracious heaven ! give me “ strength to bear this ecstasy of “ joy !—I have sustained adversity ! “ I have survived misfortune ! — “ but never have till now experienced the dangerous trial of oppressive happiness ! ”—She gazed  
for

for a moment with speechless fondness on the transfixed Augustus ; and, straining him again to her heart, continued thus —

“ It was the force of sympathy ! —

“ the voice of nature ! — that

“ inspired those sentiments which

“ interested me in the fate of my

“ Augustus ! Often, indeed, has

“ memory fondly traced, in that

“ majestic mien, those graceful features, the dear resemblance of a

“ much-loved husband ! and what

“ imagination seemed alone to

“ paint, by musing fancy’s recollective power, my raptured eyes now

“ realize before me ! — My long-lost child ! — thou art the injured—the lamented son of the

“ Viscount de St. Aubin !—and I

“ am

“ am his unfortunate and abandoned widow ! ” — In the countenance of the Chevalier was imprinted, at this discovery, the various emotions of his feeling heart — he was immoveable ! — he spoke not ! — wonder ! — rapture ! — tendernefs ! — expressed itself in his more than eloquent silence ! —

When Madame de Tourville was a little recovered from her trance of joy, she rested herself upon a sofa ; tears flowed to her relief, and she indulged those transports of parental feelings which, till that hour, she had never experienced through her life of sorrow.

Monfieur de Senanges, though a filent, was yet a delighted, witnefs  
of

of an event so unexpected : with looks of cordial friendship he congratulated them on a disclosure so important, so interesting !—When the power of language returned to Augustus, a tender scene of mutual happiness ensued ; — he seemed to have forgot even the woes of love in the exquisite sensibility of filial endearments ; but when he impatiently requested his newly acquired mother to enter upon the detail of circumstances so important to them both — “ Alas ! ” with a deep sigh, she replied, “ you must spare me  
 “ a recital, which would, at the  
 “ same time, be a renewal of my  
 “ misfortunes ! — they are already  
 “ traced by the pen of anguish,  
 “ when

“ when the heart yet bled with  
 “ recent woes ! My tale of misery  
 “ is addressed to that incomparable  
 “ friend, the Duchefs de Gramont,  
 “ a few days preceding her mar-  
 “ riage : in her laft illnefs ſhe  
 “ refigned it to me, from the  
 “ generous principle of not risk-  
 “ ing, after her death, the difclo-  
 “ ſure of events intended only for  
 “ the boſom of friendship.—I will  
 “ immediately put you in poſſeſſion  
 “ of this confidential letter, which  
 “ paints the accumulated ſorrows  
 “ of an unhappy daughter, wife,  
 “ and mother ! — How often have  
 “ I bathed it with my tears !—little  
 “ imagining I could ever be ſo  
 “ bleſt as to preſent it to a ſon,  
 VOL. II. G “ whoſe

“ whose death I had mourned ere  
 “ I had even hailed his birth.  
 “ When you shall have received it  
 “ from my hands, I will leave you  
 “ and the Count at liberty to pe-  
 “ ruse together a narrative which  
 “ will tenderly affect your sensibi-  
 “ lity.—Ah, my Augustus! — be  
 “ kind to the frailties of a father,  
 “ misled by example, not naturally  
 “ the child of vice—and pity the  
 “ errors of a mother, whose unsus-  
 “ picious innocence betrayed her  
 “ heart, and rendered her the dupe  
 “ of treacherous friendship! While  
 “ you are acquainting yourself with  
 “ the mournful records of your fa-  
 “ mily, I will retire into my closet,  
 “ to offer up my grateful adoration  
 “ to



“ to that Power who has conduct-  
 “ ed me through the thorny paths  
 “ of life to crown my declining  
 “ years with unexpected blessings!  
 “ I shall leave it to you, Augustus,  
 “ to impart to your Leonora a dis-  
 “ covery so interesting to her. The  
 “ Marchioness and Countess have  
 “ the tenderest claim to learn from  
 “ me the earliest avowal of an  
 “ event which a long friendship  
 “ for their grateful Tourville will  
 “ render the source of exquisite  
 “ happiness to them !” — With  
 these words she quitted the temple  
 to hasten in quest of the promised  
 narrative; when, almost instantly  
 G 2                      returning,

returning, she delivered it to her expecting son ; and, bidding him adieu for the present, she directed her steps once more towards the castle, where she soon imparted to the charming sisters the wondrous event of that important day.

ADELAIDE

ADELAIDE DE TOURVILLE

T O

HENRIETTA DE VALIERE.

ABBEY-AUX-BOIS.

AND do you still interest yourself, my amiable Henrietta, in the fate of an unfortunate, misguided friend? can that blameless daughter, who is on the point of presenting her hand, authorized by duty, bestow one tender thought upon the guilty Adelaide?—Yes, the innocent, the perfect Henrietta, from her own conscious virtues, can forgive the frailties of another!—You conjure me, by that tender friendship which once flattered all my wishes, to at-

tend your auspicious nuptials—Ah, no!—my fatal presence would dim with tears your hymeneal torch!—should I dare to approach the altar of propitious love, parental approbation would shun the advance of filial disobedience, and think its holy rites profaned by such a witness!—scarcely have twenty-four revolving moons passed by since this widowed hand was plighted to a husband—for whom I forfeited a daughter's name!—but soon the curses of an irritated father overtook his guilty child!—that tie, unfancified by him, fate soon dissolved!—the object of my first and last affections, by remorseless death, was snatched for ever from me!—yet I submit, oh heaven, to thy decree!

nor,

nor, sunk beneath the weight of merited afflictions, presume to murmur at my lot.—

I am no longer distinguished by the name of St. Aubin—an incensed parent would, in his dying moments, have retracted the blessing I obtained, had I not resumed that of Tourville.—You request the story of my woes from the generous wish, by sharing to alleviate them.—Alas! nor time, nor penitence, can obliterate them from my memory!—but I obey you, and commence my sad detail, regretting that the tear of friendship will bedew your bridal eye!—

You left me at the convent, when the Barons de Valiere had sum-

moned you home to make her a visit of some weeks ; and before your return I had quitted it, as I then thought, for ever. — Your gentle heart still bears in remembrance our tender parting. — For some days I yielded to my sorrows, and refused all offered consolation. — At length the arrival of Mademoiselle St. Aubin roused me from my lethargy — her affliction, the day she entered our solemn abode, attracted my compassion, and engaged my attention. She had lately lost a mother ; and was placed by the Viscount her father under the care of the Abbess, during the first days of her mourning. I forgot my own grief in soothing hers, and we  
soon

soon commenced a mutual friendship. The natural gaiety of her disposition by degrees returned, and I resumed my tranquillity, — but though her humour was obliging, and her conversation sprightly and entertaining, I began to discover that she possessed not a sympathy of heart like yours.—She wanted that gentle sensibility, that winning softness, which so tenderly attached my soul to Henrietta!—Your frequent letters were a constant amusement; and, vain of your affection, I generally made Amelia a sharer in our correspondence; but from the childish idea, that you might consider her as a rival in my affections, I forbore to mention her in my answers.



swers. —When you complained of the irksome engagements of public life, and expressed your ardent wishes to enjoy again the sweet retirement you had left within our hallowed walls, Amelia never failed to inveigh against your sentimental gravity, and to protest how much she languished to change places with you : she described the gay abode of Paris as a terrestrial paradise ; and so far influenced my judgment as to make me anxiously long to partake of its enchanting pleasures. —Such is the force of ill example ! with Henrietta I was tranquil, virtuous, and happy !—my heart imbibed from hers the solidity of reason, the confidence of innocence,

cence,

cence, and the satisfaction of a self-approving conscience. With Amelia I became restless, melancholy, and unquiet : solitude began to lose its charms, and, sighing for the joys of a world yet unknown, I privately reproached my tardy parents for delaying my introduction into it. — Fatal mistake! — dear-bought experience !—

One day Amelia received a letter, which seemed to transport her. “ Thank heaven,” said she, “ my brother comes to visit me to-morrow ; you shall see him Adelaide ; and, if you can behold him with indifference, you have an icy heart.” When I arose the next morning, I had not forgotten

gotten these words ; and, feeling a stronger inclination to conquer than be conquered, I studiously endeavoured to set off my little person to the best advantage. I looked in my glass — the glow of vanity animated my complexion ; and I descended into the parlour with a secret triumph, where I found my new friend conversing with her brother at the grate. — She presented him to me ; and in a moment I was lost to every idea but that of inspiring Monsieur de St. Aubin with the same sentiments I felt for him. His person was uncommonly handsome ; and the graces of his address were irresistible — he cast upon me such a penetrating look, that I  
foolishly

foolishly believed he read what passed in my heart. A conscious blush suffused my cheek ; and, to conceal it, I turned away my eyes, not considering that my awkward confusion was most likely to betray me. While I was in this distressing situation, I heard him whisper to his sister, “ My God, Amelia ! “ what an angel ! ” — “ Truly,” replied she, laughing, “ you both “ seem planet-struck, and I am “ likely to have a charming time “ of it ! ”

“ Come, for heaven’s sake, brother, reassume your reason, and “ inform me how the dear world of “ Paris goes on.”—She proceeded to ask ten thousand questions in a breath,

breath, and concluded with charging him to tell her father, that, if he did not recall her from the convent, she should actually fall a victim to despair. — “ Ah, sister !” returned he, with an expressive look at me, “ if you expected to retain  
 “ me an advocate in such a cause,  
 “ you should not have exposed me  
 “ to the temptation of betraying  
 “ your confidence ! — how can I  
 “ plead against myself, and assist in  
 “ removing you from a spot where  
 “ my whole soul is riveted ! — Allow  
 “ me at least to continue a few  
 “ days in your neighbourhood, to renew these heavenly visits.” He staid till the bell rung for dinner, and  
 left

left me too well convinced that I had not an icy heart! — In the evening Amelia entered my chamber with an archness in her looks which proved that she had read my sentiments.—“ Will you believe it, “ child ?” said she, “ I have already received a letter from my “ vanquished brother—you are the “ subject of every line; take it, therefore, Mademoiselle, and peruse it “ at your leisure.”—I was covered with confusion;—but, however flattering this intelligence was to my vanity, I had the prudence and resolution to resist the tempting offer.—Oh, that I had still maintained so laudable a conduct!—but, alas!—love triumphed over the feeble

feeble dictates of reason and obedience; and the promise of my hand soon followed the sacrifice of my heart.—The seducing sounds of ardent passion were ever in my ear—Amelia echoed all her brother's vows — my Henrietta was absent, and I listened! — My youth — my inexperience — must absolve my fault — and oh! my sufferings have dearly paid the forfeit of my duty. It was not till the victory of my affections was completed that Amelia alarmed my doubts of obtaining the mutual consent of our parents to our union, by informing me that, in the early part of life, the Viscount de St. Aubin and my father became inveterate



terate foes, from some misunderstanding in an affair of importance, in which they were both concerned : that they had an encounter, wherein each was slightly wounded, but which was by no means successful in effecting a reconciliation. I was thunderstruck at this intelligence, and did not attempt to conceal from Amelia that my every hope of happiness was centred in her brother. She failed not to betray to him the weakness I acknowledged ; — she contrived an interview before reflection could assert its powers, and artfully introduced my conqueror, to subdue the scruples of conflicting duty. The insinuating St. Aubin had no

sooner prevailed upon me, by  
 sighs and tears, assisted by the ar-  
 dent rhetoric of love, to promise I  
 would be only his, than he exerted  
 all his fatal influence to persuade me  
 to fly with him immediately to the  
 altar. In vain I reminded him  
 that a clandestine marriage would  
 only exasperate against me a father  
 on whose approbation I depended  
 for an ample dowry, and who might  
 never forgive my daring to unite  
 my hand unlicensed by his autho-  
 rity — that, unless the unfortunate  
 breach between our parents could  
 be healed by a proposed alliance,  
 and that the Viscount de St. Aubin  
 approved and ratified the treaty  
 by an equal fortune, I knew too  
 well

well the consequence. He artfully replied to these remonstrances, that, as I was myself the only object of his wishes, a fordid impulse should never induce him to run the risk of losing me for ever; and that, if I loved like him, I should not scruple to sacrifice to so generous a passion the empty vanity of wealth. These disinterested proofs of the tenderest attachment vanquished each filial resolution; and, as he was dearer to me than life itself, I yielded at length to his persuasive arguments, and engaged my honour to meet him at the altar the first moment that a proper opportunity offered. — My lover was in ecstasy; and, though his impatience urged me to

elope with him from the convent, yet he consented to defer his happiness till my arrival at Paris, where I had received the unexpected commands of my parents to attend them. I confess I rejoiced then at a circumstance which, in any other situation, would have been a source of the greatest regret—I mean that of your removal from Paris, the day before I reached it. Accustomed to deposit in the bosom of Henrietta every anxiety, and every pleasure, the conscious error of my conduct made me forebode the detection of her penetrating eyes. I dreaded her censure—her reproaches : —yet so infatuated was I by an extravagant passion, that

that I would have sacrificed to it my dearest friendship. Mademoiselle de St. Aubin received, about the same time, the permission of the Viscount to quit a retirement so repugnant to her inclinations. She obeyed with transport the delightful summons ; but we could propose no other intercourse than that of letters : interviews, except in public, were impossible, from the unfortunate animosity subsisting between our families. We often however exchanged epistolary converse, without the least danger of discovery from the vigilance of those who had no reason to suspect our intimacy : and, having the prudence never to employ the con-

fidence of servants in a transaction of such danger and importance, we artfully gave and received our letters, when we met in public, without observation. By these means St. Aubin and myself continued the tender intercourse of mutual vows. Upon my return home I had reason to conceive that my sudden removal from the convent was occasioned by my father's objection to my forming any friendship with Mademoiselle de St. Aubin: though he never hinted the idea, except by asking me, in a careless manner, how I liked that young lady. Love had taught me dissimulation; and reading in his eyes an immediate prohibition which might, from the  
intelligence

intelligence of mine, endanger a discovery, I instantly became guilty of the first falsehood I had ever uttered, by saying that I could form little opinion of her character, being only personally acquainted with her, as her great affliction for her recent loss made her avoid society at the Abbey-aux-Bois. He appeared pleased with this information, and immediately began a lecture upon filial duty and obedience ; from which I collected the fatal assurance that I must expect no influence from any choice of my own in marriage — that himself and my mother were the proper judges in a cause of such consequence as my settlement in life ;



and that they had provided for me a husband, both worthy and amiable, whom they should have the satisfaction of presenting to me upon his return from his travels. The stern determination of my father flattered me with no hopes of melting him by entreaties; — my heart felt all the horror of my situation, but silence gave the imaginary consent, accompanied by a respectful obeisance from my trembling knees; he observed my confusion, and, attributing it to timidity, permitted me to retire; while, putting into my hand a miniature set round with brilliants — “ There, “ Adelaide,” said he, “ view in “ that portrait the resemblance of “ the

“ the lover distinguished by my  
 “ choice, and whom you have not  
 “ only my consent but my com-  
 “ mands to receive as your future  
 “ husband.—You are too young,  
 “ and too delicate, to have suffered  
 “ yet any impression on your heart ;  
 “ let it here fix upon him to whom  
 “ I have already promised your  
 “ hand.” Scarcely had I power  
 to reach my apartment, where I  
 locked myself in to shed a torrent  
 of tears. I saw no remedy but al-  
 most an immediate marriage with  
 the man I loved.—My father’s  
 cruel disregard to my inclination  
 hardened my mind, and confirmed  
 me more strongly in my disobedi-  
 ence.—Without even deigning to  
 cast

cast my eyes upon the picture, I dashed it with scorn into a box of shells, which stood open in the corner of the room. Having considered some time the measures necessary to take, I judged it prudent not to alarm St. Aubin with the idea of a rival, lest he might be induced to take measures which might endanger a discovery. — I waited therefore for the reception of his next epistle, to fix in my reply our private nuptials.

The more I reflected upon my situation, the more I became reconciled to an act of disobedience, which I thought was justified by love.—I felt indeed a strong reluctance to wound the bosom of a  
tender

tender mother, who merited all my duty and affection ; but I could not hope to find in her a refuge from my father's fury, if I even dared to attempt disclosing to her ear the immoveable attachment of my heart to the descendant of an enemy.—Her bosom was the abode of every gentle virtue, but I knew too well it was impenetrable to weakness — and therefore I could not encourage the most distant hope that she would be indulgent to a refractory child, who had presumed to fix her wishes on an object whose family had incurred the hatred of mine. — I received this very evening a letter full of such tender complaints for my retarding

ing

ing our union, and of such irresistible entreaties to complete the felicity of St. Aubin — that love prevailed — and, in a fatal hour, I forfeited the blessing of a father to receive the hand of an inconstant husband ! ——

Mademoiselle de St. Aubin, who had been the strong promoter of our marriage, was also the witness of it. — When the irrevocable knot was tied, my resolution, instead of increasing, entirely forsook me ! — and, though I had before determined to throw myself at the feet of my parents, and to implore their pardon, I now found myself utterly incapable of confronting their merited resentment. —— After many  
vain

vain attempts to write, I at length addressed my mother, supplicating her mediation with my father, and their joint permission to throw myself at their feet with a husband, whose illustrious family I flattered myself would not be considered as unworthy their alliance. — I waited with trembling impatience for my doom, nor could the affectionate endearments of St. Aubin reassure my fears. — How inconsistent is the human mind ! — no reflections had force to restrain me from an action, which now appeared in all its horrors ! — Too late the voice of duty whispered to my conscience, and reproached me with my ingratitude and disobedience !

dience ! — I had dared to commit a deed I could neither revoke nor justify. — After having been tortured by an hour's suspense, a packet was presented me by the returning messenger — with a fatal presentiment I opened it ! — it contained my own letter, with only the following distracting lines written in the cover, in my mother's hand ! —

“ Wretched, imprudent girl ! —  
 “ in making choice of St. Aubin  
 “ for a husband thou hast lost  
 “ every pretension to a father's  
 “ blessing ! — that father renounces  
 “ thee for ever ! — thy duplicity of  
 “ conduct aggravates thy crime,  
 “ by adding deceit to disobedience.



“ence. — Allied to the family he  
 “most detests—never will he again  
 “behold thee.—Fly then far hence,  
 “and repent at a distance thy unfor-  
 “tunate union !”

I was insensible for near an hour !  
 When I recovered, finding myself  
 alone with Amelia, wildly I inquired  
 for her brother — she soothed my  
 affliction, entreated me to be com-  
 comforted, and assured me I had every  
 thing to hope from the Viscount’s  
 honour and humanity, to whom his  
 son had that moment flown to im-  
 plore protection for his Adelaide.  
 —But, alas! his heart was equally  
 obdurate! — the family resentment,  
 which had so long subsisted between  
 him and Monsieur de Tourville,

now

now rose from its embers with redoubled fury :—and so vehemently was he exasperated against his son for giving his hand to the daughter of his foe professed, that he banished him eternally from his presence!—In the bitterness of anguish I reproached St. Aubin for having trepanned me into an union with him : he could be no stranger to the implacable spirit of his father ;—and my eyes were now opened to his motives for a private marriage, which must have been actuated by the certainty of a refusal on his side, that might, by publishing our mutual attachment, from the interposition of my  
 parents,

parents, have caused an everlasting separation.

He tenderly implored my pardon, and conjured me to attribute his conduct to excess of passion.—

He added, that, since he had, for my sake, equally incurred parental displeasure, we ought, by mutually consoling each other, to compensate for every pecuniary disappointment.—“ Leave  
 “ to vulgar minds,” continued he,  
 “ the sordid pleasures of unyield-  
 “ ing self — be love our treasure!  
 “ —the rural cottage and the hum-  
 “ ble vale shall impart to our united  
 “ souls more genuine happiness than  
 “ the false splendour of exalted  
 “ life!—let me be all to Adelaide,  
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“ since Adelaide is all to me ! ” —  
 I was melted by his persuasive arguments ; love pleaded in my bosom, and stilled the tumults of upbraiding duty.

Upon reconsidering the lines traced by my mother’s hand, I cherished hopes that they were only the hasty sentiments of an incensed father, who might, by her gentle offices, at length be induced to soften in my favour. — She had not touched upon her own resentment — a circumstance of cordial comfort to my heart — it formed the most sanguine expectations ; and I flattered myself that time might efface the remembrance of my fault. — With this view I made several attempts

tempts to subdue the bosom of maternal anger ; but, alas ! every plea was ineffectual ; and I found that all my remaining happiness must centre in the affections of a husband !

To retain them I found more difficult than the strength of my own, and my confidence in his, attachment could have believed. — The Viscount, through the promised intercession of Mademoiselle de St. Aubin, who acknowledged herself his favourite child, and continued to profess for me the warmest friendship, was prevailed upon to resign to his son a small estate a very few leagues from Paris ; whither we retired—and where I could

have tasted, with my beloved St. Aubin, every joy that competency can give to an unaspiring mind ;—but, born to high expectations, and endued with a taste for every expensive pleasure, he sighed for dear variety, and found the insipid attentions of a wife he once adored did not compensate for those lost delights he had resigned for her !—I saw the labouring conflicts of his soul ; and, sensible that reproaches were not likely to strengthen his wavering attachment, I urged him to change the scene ; and, by mixing with his former associates at Paris, to dissipate, in some measure, the remorse of having incurred the resentment of a father.—With avidity

dity he embraced a propofal fo agreeable to his inclinations. He even, in the gaiety of his heart, expreffed a wifh that I would accompany him ; but my fpirits were too much d preffed for me to think of quitting a retirement which allowed me the indulgence of my frows.

For fome months St. Aubin divided his time between Paris and our fweet retreat ; and I had no reafon to complain of his want of tendernels.—I ever welcomed him with fmiles ; and he either felt or counterfeited raptures when he returned. But, by degrees, his vifits at home were lefs frequent : he became filent and referved ; and, if I gently reproached his coldnefs, or dropped



an involuntary tear, he chid me with moroseness. I had no participating friend to share my griefs; and, by partaking to relieve them, my own family, and that of St. Aubin, united to disclaim me; even my sweet Henrietta, submissive to parental laws, renounced in the rebellious child the guilty friend !

Thus was I excluded from the world, and left a prey to an unavailing penitence, which nothing but the indifference of the man for whom I had resigned so much could have awakened in me !—Amelia, it is true, sometimes visited me in my solitude ; but her attentions began likewise to be on the wane ; and I, by sad experience, found the instability

bility of friendship as well as love. She was wholly occupied by worldly pleasures — splendour and parade dazzled her senses — ambition, vanity, and pride, obstructed in her heart even the natural softness and compassion of her sex.

When I lamented one day the declining affection of her brother, and his continual absences, instead of being moved by my tears, or soothing my distress, she laughed at my folly, and ironically told me, that I must possess a large portion of vanity, indeed, to expect constancy in man, or truth in plighted faith ! — that, instead of weeping the inattentions of a husband, I ought to requite them ;

and, by exhibiting my boasted beauty to the world, to attract furrounding lovers.

Shocked with the avowal of such sentiments, I rebuked her with a warmth which drew upon me the most cruel reproaches! — She upbraided me with my ingratitude; — and, dropping the veil of unsubstantial friendship, her dark soul stood all confessed before me! — She told me haughtily that I owed to her my present maintenance — that, when my own family arrogantly disclaimed alliance with her illustrious house, and reprobated me for ever, as though I had contaminated the blood I had so greatly ennobled, her generous interpo-

sition

fition had prevailed upon her father (notwithstanding my wily arts had seduced an only son to disobedience) to shelter me from poverty and want! — I disdained a reply to such insulting language; and, though I felt all the indignation that wounded pride, yet conscious superiority, could inspire, I assumed an air of provoking unconcern: and coldly saying—I left her to the reflections of her heart, which might suggest to her a supply of new invectives — retired to my chamber, where, in an agony of tears, I bewailed my situation, and ruminated upon the misfortunes I had brought upon myself. — I soon heard her carriage drive  
 from

from the door ; and, I confess, felt astonished that, after the repeated and unnumbered professions of her inviolable friendship, she could have resolution or indifference enough to leave me upon such terms. — But I shortly found that she wished an opportunity to give up my acquaintance, and had created a voluntary dispute, to throw upon me the odium of her desertion.

Though I had discovered since our alliance many failings in her character, and errors in her conduct, which I attributed to the neglects of a very superficial education, yet little did I think her capable of such abject sentiments : I had a confidence in her affection,  
and

and had in reality for her the regard she only personated for me : — my relenting heart prepared to receive her concessions, felt, consequently, strongly mortified by her sudden departure, which was an indication how unimportant I was become to her ! — The next day St. Aubin unexpectedly arrived. — Cruel as were his neglects, my heart bounded at his approach. — Had he bestowed on me one smile, I could have forgotten every former unkindness — but, alas ! — frowns lowered upon his brow ! — and the impending tempest lightened in his eye ! — Notwithstanding all my conscious innocence, I trembled. — He observed this false evidence

dence of guilt, and at length broke the awful silence.—“ You have  
 “ done well, Adelaide,” said he in a stern accent, “ to deprive  
 “ yourself of the only friend fortune had left you :—your ingratitude of temper has extended  
 “ itself to the sister of your husband ; — but be assured the investives you have dared to  
 “ bestow on Mademoiselle de St. Aubin shall be properly resented by a brother, who will suffer  
 “ no indignities from a dependent wife. — In forfeiting Amelia’s  
 “ friendship you have lost all pretensions to my love.” — “ Say  
 “ rather,” replied I, in a tone raised by my indignation, “ that  
 “ the



“ the extinction of that feeble love  
 “ preceded even the forfeit of that  
 “ boasted friendship; and, conse-  
 “ quently, has exposed me to the  
 “ contempt and ridicule of your  
 “ sister. I hope, however, wretched  
 “ as I am, I shall always have spi-  
 “ rit left to resent an insult offered  
 “ to my honour, and virtue to  
 “ protect it. Her friendship I  
 “ solemnly abjure, with all the  
 “ scorn it merits; — the woman  
 “ who can propose retaliation for  
 “ a husband’s infidelity must be  
 “ unworthy the sacred name of  
 “ friend, and lost to every senti-  
 “ ment of delicacy!” — “ When a  
 “ wife descends to make complaints  
 “ of a husband, she must expect,”  
 interrupted

interrupted he, “ the censure of  
 “ the world.—Amelia treated you,  
 “ in all probability, with the levity  
 “ your conduct merits. —The wo-  
 “ man who is guilty of one breach  
 “ of duty may be supposed capa-  
 “ ble of more; and she who could  
 “ act in defiance of parental claims  
 “ will scarcely be very scrupulous  
 “ in regard to conjugal ones — wit-  
 “ nefs myself,” affuming an air of  
 aggravating indifference and ironi-  
 cal ease—“ my passion for Adelaide  
 “ de Tourville subdued even the  
 “ respect I owed my father ;—and  
 “ when that subsides another object  
 “ (what mortal can resist almighty  
 “ love !) may have power to make  
 “ me forget the marriage vow.” —  
 “ Ah,

“ Ah, barbarous St. Aubin !” cried  
 I, bursting into tears, “ can the  
 “ man for whom I resigned each  
 “ filial sentiment reproach the ac-  
 “ tion he himself inspired ? — No,  
 “ — ungrateful, cruel husband ! — it  
 “ was not from levity of conduct  
 “ that I dared to break through the  
 “ first ties of duty ! — A pure, a  
 “ strong, unalterable love, attached  
 “ me to an object I once thought  
 “ worthy of it ! — it seduced my in-  
 “ experienced youth and artless  
 “ affections from the path of pru-  
 “ dence and discretion. — I sacrificed  
 “ my heart ! — You saw your con-  
 “ quest, and obtained my hand ! —  
 “ At the holy altar I resigned my  
 “ self your legal victim ! — how  
 “ have

“ have you repaid my love, my  
 “ confidence?—Fatal weakness!—  
 “ I have incurred the curse of dis-  
 “ obedience!—and thus, justly re-  
 “ nounced by an offended father,  
 “ though cruelly abandoned by  
 “ an ungrateful husband, I have  
 “ hoarded up for my remaining days  
 “ remorse and wretchedness!” — I  
 fixed my flowing eyes upon him;  
 he regarded me with a mixture of  
 pity, tenderness, and shame!—He  
 took my hand, and gently pressing it,  
 melted into tears. — Instantly my  
 anger vanished — I sunk upon my  
 knees, and implored his forgiveness  
 if I had, in the anguish of my soul,  
 too warmly upbraided him. — He  
 raised me instantly; and, folding  
 me

me in his arms, conjured me to be comforted, and acknowledged he had merited my reproaches, and was himself the sole aggressor.

“ Alas ! ” said he, “ to one seduced, like me, so early by the  
 “ fascinating follies of the world—  
 “ how arduous the task to fly its  
 “ strong temptations!—Be it thine,  
 “ sweet monitress, to point the path  
 “ of happiness and virtue—thine to  
 “ recall the wanderer home ! ” He  
 ceased — Ah, happy moment of  
 reviving love!—ye fleeting raptures,  
 never to return ! — St. Aubin was  
 this evening every thing my fondest  
 hopes could wish—I led him round  
 our small domain ; his smiles il-  
 lumed the blooming scene of na-  
 VOL. II. K ture ;

ture ; it appeared to my delighted eyes a paradise regained ! — The trees, the flowers, seemed conscious of my happiness ; the grove with fresher verdure glowed, the shrubs with sweeter fragrance breathed. The succeeding morning dawned on our returning felicity : soft hope once more revisited my bosom : yet the rising fear of timid love would still obtrude itself an anxious guest. The artifices of Amelia I had too painfully experienced not to dread :—in ruminating on the character of this fickle, this beloved husband, I found his judgment was easily led astray by the prevalence of example and the force of precept ; he was neither  
proof

proof against the allurements of vice nor the persuasive sentiments of virtue ; each reigned alternate—the impulse of the moment ruled his heart, and the present object had the resistless power of influencing his conduct. This was a dangerous weakness, and fatally predicted the sequel of my misfortunes ! St. Aubin joined me in my favourite alcove, which nature had adorned with fragrant jessamine and verdant myrtle.—I observed that he was absorbed in thought ; and, upon my addressing to him some interesting expressions, he looked upon me with a mixture of tenderness and pity. Our tête à tête was shortly interrupted by the



arrival of a letter from Amelia  
 I changed countenance at the well-  
 known deceitful hand — my heart  
 presaged a thousand fears, which  
 were, alas ! but too well founded,  
 and too soon accomplished. Mon-  
 sieur de St. Aubin looked distressed ;  
 he told me that he felt the most  
 unfeigned reluctance to quit the  
 enchanting spot which contained  
 his treasure ; yet he could not re-  
 fuse the pressing invitation of his  
 sister, who urged him to visit her  
 that morning. He added, that the  
 influence she possessed over his fa-  
 ther made it necessary for him to  
 continue on good terms with her :  
 nor did he doubt but that her  
 summons proceeded from an ar-  
 dent

dent desire to be reconciled to me. He entreated I would, for his sake, forgive the unguarded impetuosity of her temper, which, he confessed, sometimes obscured her virtues; and even proposed my accompanying him to Paris. My pride could not admit the idea of condescending to make the first advances to a woman, who had not only grossly insulted, but had cruelly attempted to injure me in the affections of my husband. I assured him however that, as I could refuse him nothing that was essential to his happiness, I would consent to forgive Amelia, upon condition that she made our reconciliation her request. He was satisfied; and, pro-

misgiving to return in a few hours, tenderly embraced and quitted me. I gazed after him till distance concealed him from my view; and mourned his departure as if I had a presentiment of my misfortune. Towards evening I began anxiously to expect him — upon every sound of horses on the adjacent road my bounding heart anticipated his approach—but, alas! every hope vanished, when a note was presented to me from the dear deceiver—it contained a few hasty lines, written by his trembling hand, entreating me not to be uneasy at his absence; that family business of importance to our happiness detained him from me a few days; after

after which, he would fly on the wings of rapture to his beloved Adelaide. I kept this messenger while I wrote an answer, full of tendernefs, lamenting our fepARATION, but expreffing my gratitude for his attention, my confidence in his affection, and my ardent wifhes for fuccefs in his renewed application to the Vifcount, which I concluded was the bufinefs in queftion.

A fortnight elapfed, yet he returned not to Belle-vue.—During that interval I had the confolation of receiving feveral pathetic letters, filled with reiterated vows of everlafting love, bewailing the neceffity of his tedious abfence;

but never mentioning either the name of his sister or the progress of our cause.—At length he ceased to write, and all my fears and apprehensive doubts returned with double force : even languid hope, like an expiring flame, ceased now to sooth my desolated heart ! One day a letter, addressed to me in a disguised hand, was brought, which threw me into an agony of grief. These were the contents :

“ Mademoiselle de St. Aubin  
 “ deceives you : — she is a false  
 “ friend : — she has introduced to  
 “ your husband a widow of power-  
 “ ful attractions ——— Madame de  
 “ Miran holds him in the strongest  
 “ chains — on her he lavishes those  
 “ moments

“ moments he absents himself from  
 “ you.”

Grief, jealousy, and indignation, took possession of my soul : in vain I endeavoured to discover to whose officious zeal I was indebted for this mortifying intelligence. The abruptness of the style was calculated to wound, and not to soothe me ; and was, therefore, evidently dictated by an enemy rather than a friend. Alas ! I was but too conscious that my imprudence had not left me one object whom I could call by that endearing name. “ Ah,” cried I, almost frantic with resentment, “ bereft of every consolation — forsaken by the world ;  
 “ — is it alone to aggravate my  
 “ wretchedness

“ wretchedness that I am informed  
 “ my husband is unfaithful !” — I  
 flew to my writing-desk ; and, in  
 the inconsiderate warmth of jealous  
 passion, wrote and dispatched to  
 St. Aubin the following lines :

“ If the charms of Madame de  
 “ Miran have not quite effaced the  
 “ remembrance of a once-loved  
 “ wife, fly instantly to Bell-vue, and  
 “ rescue from the grave the wrong-  
 “ ed, the unfortunate, Adelaide !”

I waited the event in a state little  
 short of desperation, when the lines  
 I here transcribe, which were de-  
 livered to me the succeeding day,  
 bereaved me of every remaining  
 hope.

“ Reproaches



“ Reproaches are ill qualified to  
 “ renew abated love ;—and the  
 “ charms of Madame de Miran,  
 “ powerful as they are, would be  
 “ insufficient to maintain their em-  
 “ pire, could she expect to reign  
 “ unrivalled in a heart formed for  
 “ inconstancy.

“ LEWIS DE ST. AUBIN.”

My pride alone could have pre-  
 vented my sinking under this ca-  
 lamity. — The ingratitude of my  
 cruel husband roused every senti-  
 ment which could be inspired by  
 injured love. — I disdained to repeat  
 my upbraidings ; but left to time,  
 and the influence of remorse, to  
 plead

plead my cause. When the first transports of my rage subsided, the softer passions soon returned;—affection once more mingled with my resentment; and pity for the yet loved cause of all my woes extinguished even the force of jealousy. A fixed melancholy preyed upon my spirits—the tears of silent anguish rolled incessantly down my cheek:—without a friend to participate and sooth my sorrows, I was, perhaps, the most miserable being that existed. Weeks and months passed on, yet my inhuman husband, still absent from me, continued his career of fatal follies. To enhance my misfortunes, the period approached which was to  
render

render me a wretched mother. The force of maternal feelings prevailed upon me to address once more this dear, this cruel husband! — and to conjure him, for the sake of an innocent infant, to consent to receive it at its birth from the arms of a parent who would too probably fall the early sacrifice of his unkindness!

I dispatched this letter by an old gardener, who was my only male domestic—charging him to deliver it himself, if possible, into the hands of his master. — The good man looked at me with honest earnestness; and, perceiving that I wept, (though I endeavoured to conceal my emotion) he told me his heart  
bled

bled for me — that he rejoiced in an opportunity of doing me service, and would not leave Paris till he had executed his commission: —

“ Be comforted, my sweet young lady,” continued he, “ I will warrant I shall bring happy tidings.”

It was so long since I had heard the soothing voice of kindness, that I was sensibly affected with the words of this worthy man—I thanked him heartily for his attachment, and assured him that, if he succeeded, I should ever esteem him as my guardian angel. — As he was obliged to walk to Paris, I allowed him two days to perform his journey and to return — what an interval

interval of hope and fear for me !  
— I watched at my window the whole day which was fixed for his arrival — the tortures of suspense that I underwent can only be conceived by those who have loved like me ! — At length I perceived him advancing with slow and tottering steps—I descended into the garden, and hastened to meet my aged messenger. — “ Oh, Jaquelin,” I exclaimed — “ do you bring me “ life or death !” — He cast upon me such a look of woe, that, in a moment, I read my disappointment ! — I sunk down upon the stump of an old tree—and, had not a flood of tears rushed to my relief, I think I must have expired.—The poor old  
man

man stood by, the image of despair !  
 — he wrung his withered hands —  
 tore his grey locks — while the big  
 drops rolled down his furrowed  
 cheek ! — At length I broke the  
 painful silence :—“ In pity tell me,”  
 I cried, “ the extent of my misery  
 “ —I am inured to adversity—and  
 “ stand now prepared for all the  
 “ horrors of my fate ! — Monsieur  
 “ de St. Aubin cruelly persists in  
 “ abandoning his wretched wife !  
 “ —Deaf to the pleadings of nature  
 “ and humanity — he leaves his  
 “ child an orphan !” — “ Alas,  
 “ Madam !” replied Jaquelin —  
 “ your sorrows cut my very soul !  
 “ — but it is in vain to deceive  
 “ you — my young master has  
 “ quitted

“ quitted Paris, and is set out for  
 “ Italy ! — But take comfort — he  
 “ may yet soon return.” — “ Ah !  
 exclaimed I, strongly agitated —  
 “ can you name me the compa-  
 “ nion of his flight ! — too surely  
 “ Madame de Miran is the fatal  
 “ object for whom he forsakes the  
 “ unfortunate Adelaide !” — It is  
 amazing that I could support this  
 event with so much composure —  
 but I confess that, at that moment,  
 I felt the shock of his departure  
 with less violence than I should  
 have done an absolute refusal of my  
 petition — that would have implied  
 a hardened heart indeed — whereas  
 his quitting France with the pre-  
 sent object of a volatile passion



was only the natural effect of female artifice.—Time would dispel a temporary love ; —I consequently cherished hopes that indifference for my rival might restore him to my arms ; and founded the flattering expectation from the acknowledged inconstancy of his disposition. — Upon interrogating my faithful ambassador, he confessed that Madame de Miran was actually with my wanderer. — Amelia had made no secret of it to Jaquelin, but had informed him of it with malicious pleasure. — He had applied to her for the residence of his master—and she had vouchsafed to order his admittance into her presence. — “ Upon my describing,” continued

continued the good man, “ your  
 “ inquietude, she laughed dis-  
 “ dainfully, and said you might  
 “ thank yourself for your hus-  
 “ band’s infidelity—that your con-  
 “ tinued jealousy and incessant  
 “ bewailings, for having incurred  
 “ by your marriage with him  
 “ your parents’ displeasure, had  
 “ exhausted her brother’s patience,  
 “ and entirely extinguished his af-  
 “ fections—that, for her part, you  
 “ had treated her with too much  
 “ insolence and ingratitude to re-  
 “ tain her friendship — and that  
 “ she was unalterably determined  
 “ to trouble herself no more about  
 “ you ! — I presumed to plead  
 “ your cause with honest warmth

“ — but she commanded me to be  
 “ silent, and insisted upon my retir-  
 “ ing with a tone so absolute, that  
 “ I instantly obeyed her. — De-  
 “ termined for your sake, my dear  
 “ young lady, to gain all the intel-  
 “ ligence I could in this mysterious  
 “ affair, I visited the servants hall  
 “ under pretence of taking some  
 “ refreshment, where I found one  
 “ of the domestics as communi-  
 “ cative as I could wish.—He told  
 “ me that Madame de St. Aubin,  
 “ who had resided constantly with  
 “ the Viscount since her brother’s  
 “ marriage, had established her in-  
 “ fluence upon the resentment of  
 “ his father; that without the  
 “ knowledge of the Viscount she  
 “ privately

“ privately visited her brother, and  
 “ had introduced him to a young  
 “ widow of incomparable beauty,  
 “ but light character, with the ini-  
 “ quitous design of separating him  
 “ from you. Her wicked arts pre-  
 “ vailed. — My thoughtless master  
 “ became enamoured with Ma-  
 “ dame de Miran, and was easily  
 “ persuaded, by a cruel sister, to  
 “ abandon his charming wife. Ma-  
 “ dame de St. Aubin foreseeing  
 “ that you, Madam, might again  
 “ allure him to Belle-vue, proposed  
 “ to your rival to draw him into  
 “ Italy, where she flatters herself  
 “ that she will establish her em-  
 “ pire. Her dread of the Viscount’s  
 “ reconciliation with his son is an-

“ other motive, besides her hatred  
 “ of you, to promote his absence :  
 “ the very elopement she herself  
 “ conceived and planned has been  
 “ urged by her to her father as  
 “ a fresh proof of my young mas-  
 “ ter’s dissolute conduct:—in short,  
 “ she uses every argument to ex-  
 “ asperate him more against you  
 “ both, with the dishonourable  
 “ view of securing to herself his  
 “ noble fortune. It is but too pro-  
 “ bable she will succeed ; the Vis-  
 “ count grows infirm — his intel-  
 “ lects decline—and, as she never  
 “ leaves him, she has every advan-  
 “ tage her base soul can wish.”  
 Thus ended the poor old man’s  
 narrative. I thanked him for his  
 honest

honest zeal ; and to his consoling and religious admonitions I owed the resignation with which I endeavoured to support my calamities. My two female attendants were the wife and daughter of this worthy creature ; they had been recommended by Amelia upon our first arrival at Belle-vue, and, as they had inhabited this house for many years, I had no inclination to remove them.

Janetton had nursed Mademoiselle de St. Aubin, and Nanette was her foster-sister. As they were totally dependant on her bounty, it is natural to suppose they were strictly attached to her : they had frequently attempted to ingratiate

L 4

themselves

themselves into my confidence; but I never liked the freedom of their manners; the mother was a compound of low art and fawning flattery; the daughter, of affected ignorance, yet assuming pertness—I always kept them at a distance, and ever preferred solitude, and the contemplation of my sorrows, to their conversation; consequently they looked upon me as a proud creature, who merited the misfortunes of my destiny. — Jaquelin, however, became my favourite — my only friend : — his simplicity of manners were marked on his open countenance — his actions were regulated by the principles of virtue, and his sentiments spoke the language



guage of a heart which would have done honour to exalted rank. One day Janetton asked my permission to make a visit to a sick aunt in Paris: I readily granted her request, and consented to spare her for a couple of days. After dinner I strolled into the garden, which I commonly did every afternoon, though the coldness of the weather rendered it far from pleasant.—The good Jaquelin met me, and, respectfully accosting me, begged I would inform him whether his wife had received my permission to attend Mademoiselle de St. Aubin! — I looked surprised, and answered that she had mentioned the illness of an aunt as the motive of her absence,

absence. “Then,” replied he, “she  
 “has deceived you Madam—by  
 “Nanette’s confession to me she  
 “is going to Paris upon the sum-  
 “mons of Mademoiselle de St.  
 “Aubin, who has sent for her a  
 “horse and servant, which mys-  
 “teriously waited at the corner of  
 “the lane; and the jade is actually  
 “departed without even consult-  
 “ing my pleasure.—She is gone  
 “to plot and act mischief with that  
 “implacable fury!” — “Compose  
 “yourself, my good friend,” re-  
 turned I, “no harm can en-  
 “sue from this visit.—Alas! what  
 “further injury can Amelia offer  
 “the wretched Adelaide! — her  
 “cruel vengeance has been long  
 “complete,

“ complete, and I am now reduced  
 “ below her malice !—It is natural  
 “ she should regard her nurse,  
 “ barbarian as she is ; — and I  
 “ would upon no account de-  
 “ prive your wife of any mark of  
 “ her lady’s liberality.” — “ Ah,  
 “ you are too good for this world !”  
 replied Jaquelin, shaking his head :  
 “ but, however, had I been at  
 “ home time enough to coun-  
 “ teract your orders (which, upon  
 “ this occasion, I should have taken  
 “ the liberty of doing), Janetton  
 “ should have found me once too  
 “ cunning for her.” — He left me  
 muttering to himself, and shrug-  
 ing up his shoulders, to vent upon  
 Nanette the overflowings of that  
 well-meant

well-meant zeal for his unfortunate mistress, which superseded in his bosom even his conjugal and parental affections.

Janetton punctually returned on the appointed day; and, more officious than ever to please, became rather troublesome by her assiduities — but, irksome as they were, being conscious that I should too soon require her tenderness and care, I pretended to receive them with gratitude. In regard to my own life I should have been totally indifferent; but, as far as it was concerned with that of an innocent infant, whose existence I ardently wished to preserve, (in hopes of presenting it some day to an affectionate

tionate father) I resolved no attention should be wanting on my part which maternal duty could suggest. — I even began to take some degree of delight in arranging a nursery; and mused, with melancholy pleasure, upon the future blessing yet in store. — Though, alas! in anticipating a mother's fondness I painfully regretted my happiness must be incomplete in the agonizing recollection of my forsaken widowed state! — I was roused from one of these reveries by Jaquelin's knocking at my chamber door. I sat reclining on a chair, one foot resting on the rocker of a cradle, which, with involuntary motion, rolled it deliberately

berately to and fro, with as much care as if it were already the repository of a sleeping infant.—The door opened, and discovered to my view my good old friend bending under the weight of a large coffer.—His countenance was unusually gay—he placed his load upon the table.—“ There,” said he, “ thank God, “ Providence has sent us something.”—He proceeded to untie the cordage—“ But how,” said I, “ did you gain possession of this “ prize?—Are you very certain “ that it belongs to us?”—“ Aye, “ by St. Jerome does it,” replied he;—“ is not your name St. Aubin?—Look at the address.”—I rose to examine it—but what various

rious emotions of hope and fear I sustained upon discovering the well-known characters to be written by my beloved mother! — I clasped my uplifted hands with transport, and uttered my grateful thanks to that Being who seemed now to look with pity on me!

When Jaquelin had finished opening it — “ There,” said he, “ my sweet mistress; feast yourself with the contents, and believe old Jaquelin another time.” — So saying, the worthy creature left me. For some moments I was incapable of examining the trunk; my whole frame shook with an universal tremour. — At length my trembling hands removed the paper which  
was



was spread upon the surface; and I found, to my astonishment, a complete set of the most elegant infant habiliments. In vain I searched for a few lines of maternal tenderness, to convey one gentle blessing to my contrite heart, revoking the cruel sentence of a father's curse! — Suddenly I espied, at the bottom of the box, two papers, sealed up and directed to Adelaide. — The first contained a beautiful gold coral, which had been mine in infancy, richly adorned with jewels, and stamped with the initials of my name—the other enveloped a hundred louis d'ors—but no address to myself had I the happiness to find!—however I  
looked

looked upon these unexpected attentions as auspicious omens of a future pardon.—I wept for near an hour, with tears of heartfelt gratitude, over these tokens of a mother's care; and, at length, calling in my three domestics, in the effusion of my joy I made them the partakers of so flattering an event; and asked Jaquelin from whence he had received the box: he informed me that, on opening a back door, he found it placed upon the step; and that, on reading the superscription, he brought it instantly to me.—I perceived Janetton and Nanette to look significantly upon one another, and that their respect considerably increased though—I

thought I traced upon the countenance of the former a kind of conscious shame, which I attributed to the corrections of remorse for having attempted to deceive me in her late excursion to Paris.—I made each of them a present out of my little store : — the old man would have rejected the donation, and have prevented their receiving it, but I made a point of his accepting these tokens of my friendship.

I had undergone too much agitation to attempt to write that day; and deferred, therefore, till the next, a letter of acknowledgment to my generous mother : — but, alas ! my appointed hour was come ! — I was taken ill before this task of duty  
was

was performed ! — For several days my life was despaired of; during which interval I was totally insensible to all around me.—Upon the return of recollection I perceived Janetton watching by my bedside; — I feebly drew aside the curtain, through which I had discovered her shadow; and my longing eye sought in vain for the sweet reward of all my anguish.—With difficulty I uttered, “ Where, where, is “ my child ? ” — Janetton looked distressed, put her finger to her mouth, and endeavoured to compose me; observing, at the same time, an apparent intention not to answer: but, upon my repeating the question with visible inquietude—

tude—"Hush, Madam!" said she, in a low voice, "be silent, and do not agitate yourself."—She officiously brought me a cordial, which I patiently swallowed; and, ringing a bell, Nanette appeared.—The mother, for an instant, forgot her own advice, and shouted out—"A miracle!—A miracle!—Madame's senses are restored!"—I looked wishfully at Nanette; and, supposing she came from the adjacent nursery, I entreated her, in a whisper, to bring my infant, adding that the sight of such a treasure would be the most effectual restorative they could administer:—I paused, and listened with anxious ears if I could catch the plaintive sounds

sounds of those endearing cries  
 which cling round the fond mother's heart — but hearing none —  
 “ It sleeps,” I cried, — “ my  
 “ cherub sleeps ! — Oh ! guardian  
 “ angels, watch its slumbers ! ” —  
 They looked at each other, then  
 at me, and continued silent. —  
 “ Well,” said I, endeavouring to  
 rise in my bed, — “ if you are  
 “ cruel enough to keep it from  
 “ my sight, I will seek for it myself  
 “ self at the peril of my life. — I attempted,  
 indeed, to rise, but sunk down again upon my pillow from  
 total weakness : however, I assumed  
 strength enough to say, in a resolute  
 tone, that I insisted upon being  
 obeyed. — They then whispered to-

gether, and, by degrees, at length informed me (what I began to suspect) that my unfortunate son survived his birth but a few hours!— Though I sensibly felt this additional stroke of fate, yet the weakness of my frame prevented my expressing any outrageous grief!— I raised my languid eyes to heaven, and silently submitted to its decrees. — By slow advances I gradually mended—my youth and constitution repulsed the complicated force of bodily malady and mental anguish; and I lived to encounter and survive greater evils than I had yet experienced!

I first employed my returning strength to write a letter, fraught  
with



with duty, penitence, and gratitude, to my mother. It sensibly wounded me to name the man still too dear to my affections with reproach;—but, as I was conscious that the tongue of fame would, even were I silent on the subject, proclaim my injuries, I informed her that my disobedience had been amply revenged in the inconstancy of a husband—and once more implored her to permit an unfortunate and contrite daughter to sue for pardon at her honoured feet!—Several times, during my confinement, I had anxiously inquired for my poor Jaquelin; and, after repeated evasions, was grieved by the intelligence that the good creature had,

in an expedition to Paris on horse-back, fallen from his horse, and dislocated his leg; but that, by the humanity of Mademoiselle de St. Aubin, at whose house he was attended by an eminent surgeon, he was likely to do well. — If Jaquelin had been my parent I could scarce have felt more than I did on his account; and I entreated that, when he could be moved with safety, he might be transported in a horse-litter to Belle-vue.

As soon as I was sufficiently recovered to venture into the air, I insisted upon being directed to the spot which contained the relics of my departed son. — In a wilderness of shrubs I discovered his little grave! —

grave! — here every emotion of maternal tenderness agonized my heart! — As I was totally insensible from the hour of his birth, and he had been deposited in the ground before I was restored to recollection, I now, for the first time, approached my child! — Ah! how approached him! — not with the transports of a happy mother, who presses to clasp to her fond bosom the blooming pledge of hymeneal love! — Exchanged for the soft cradle of reposing infancy — was the cold bed of death! — the promised comfort of my future days wrapped in eternal sleep! — Sweet babe! — thou never knewest a parent! — thy ill-fated birth was but the passport

port to an early tomb!—Had heaven, in pity for thy wretched mother, permitted her to lay her burthen down, and share thy grave, the blessing would have been a compensation for her sorrows.—The outcast daughter—the childless mother—and the widowed wife—had been at rest, and all her woes forgotten!—but justice suffers not rewards of guilt!—The ungrateful fugitive, who had plunged a dagger in the bosom of those who gave her being, was decreed to feel maternal anguish; and where she inflicted the wound herself to bleed!

When I had relieved the oppression of my heart by torrents of assisting

fisting tears, I quitted the dear spot  
 which contained my lifeless trea-  
 sure : — here I made each morn a  
 sadly soothing visit — here daily  
 paid the tributary debt of Nature's  
 grief — till a calm and gentle me-  
 lancholy succeeded the violence of  
 recent sorrow. I anxiously waited  
 the return of Jaquelin, to whose  
 honest hands I destined an employ-  
 ment his zeal for my repose I knew  
 would execute with joy—it was to  
 protect from the inclement skies  
 the repository of my lost hope!  
 —there I meant to rear the ever-  
 verdant laurel — the silver fir and  
 lofty cedar : — these were to repel  
 the winter's blast ; and summer's  
 zephyrs were to waft the spicy  
 sweets

sweets of intermingling flowers.—  
 Pardon, Henrietta! — my dearest,  
 my sole surviving friend! — pardon  
 the wretch who fondly dwells upon  
 the loved remembrance of her lost  
 child! — thou wilt one day feel a  
 mother's transport! — Oh! mayest  
 thou never know a mother's an-  
 guish! — thy spotless virtues will  
 secure those blessings which retri-  
 bution's justice granted to me alone  
 for punishments!

I now began to despair of ever  
 beholding again my still, still dear  
 inconstant! — yet found myself but  
 ill prepared for the fatal blow im-  
 pending on my head! — I was mu-  
 sing at a window upon my misfor-  
 tunes, when Le Claire, the valet  
 of

of Monsieur de St. Aubin, galloped up to the gate!—my eyes had only power to seek in vain one flattering instant for the loved cause of all my sorrows!—they grew dim!—my senses failed me!—and I sunk upon the floor;—when I recovered, I found Janetton and Nannette busily occupied in restoring me to life—I pushed them from me, and called aloud for Le Claire—he rushed into my presence—“Tell me — tell me” exclaimed I—“where hast thou left my husband?”—he bowed respectfully, looked distressed, and was silent—“Oh”, cried I, frantically clasping my hands—“in pity to a wretch, confess what led thee hither!—

“fear



“ fear not to impart thy embassy—  
 “ does thy inhuman master destine  
 “ me new insults !”—“ Ah, Ma-  
 “ dam ! my master !”—replied he  
 mournfully — “ he is incapable  
 “ of offending more — Mademoi-  
 “ selle de St. Aubin commanded me  
 “ to come—reluctantly I obeyed—  
 “ my respect, my gratitude, re-  
 “ coiled at the idea of adding to  
 “ such sorrows !”—“ How,” cried  
 I, — “ is not that cruel woman yet  
 “ weary of persecuting an unhappy  
 “ wife through her arts—forsaken  
 “ by the man who should be her  
 “ protector !

“ What fresh instance of a hus-  
 “ band’s perfidy does her barbarity  
 “ prepare for me !” — “ Alas !” —  
 replied

replied Le Claire — “ you have  
 “ nothing more to suffer from my  
 “ unfortunate, misguided master !  
 “ — he has made a fatal atonement  
 “ for all his errors !”

“ Gracious God !” — exclaimed  
 I — while a thrilling horror ran  
 through my veins — “ what  
 “ dreadful tale hast thou to tell,  
 “ and I to hear !—my prophetic  
 “ fears pronounce that I have no  
 “ more a husband !”

He shook his head, turned away  
 his eyes, which gave testimony to  
 his feelings—but answered not !—  
 I sunk upon my knees ; and every  
 tender sentiment, which in the  
 dawn of love had attached my  
 soul, rushed into my bosom with  
 redoubled

redoubled force.—“ Oh ! St. Au-  
 “ bin !—my adored St. Aubin !”—  
 I cried, “ then thou art gone for  
 “ ever !—never till this moment  
 “ was Adelaide irreparably — truly  
 “ wretched !—not even thy incon-  
 “ stancy could efface my love !—  
 “ Amidst my sorrows I cherished  
 “ still the dear remembrance of thy  
 “ former kindness — the soothing  
 “ hope of thy restored affections !  
 “ —Oh! that I had died with thee !  
 “ —one grave would have united  
 “ us ; and thou couldest not have  
 “ escaped me beyond the cold con-  
 “ fines of the tomb !”

Thus did I rave on — nor did I  
 shed one tear.—To move me, Le  
 Claire began the subject of his death  
 —I sat motionless upon the seat, to  
 which

which they had raised me ; and, notwithstanding my agony of mind, I heard distinctly every word he uttered. — He informed me that his master, having accompanied Madame de Miran to Florence, had by various attachments awakened the jealousy of my rival — that, in particular, a beautiful Italian, named Seraphina, had inspired him with admiration ; but that still he neglected not Madame de Miran, at whose palace he resided in great splendour — but one day having, by her emissaries, gained private intelligence of an assignation with Seraphina, Madame de Miran found means to inspire her new rival with so strong a suspi-

cion of his falsehood, that, in the extravagant height of jealous fury, she infused a deadly poison into some lemonade which was presented to her lover, and which, in a few hours, terminated his life in strong convulsions.—Seraphina repented, too late, her barbarous revenge, and absconded to a convent before the event was made public. — Le Claire attended his expiring master in his last moments, who expressed, in some of his short intervals of speech, the tenderest remorse for me! —“ Oh, “ my Adelaide! my injured wife!” he cried, “ may my death expiate “ my crimes recommend the an-  
“ gel

“ gel sufferer to my father ! — if  
“ there yet exists a pledge of our  
“ unfortunate union, may the child  
“ recompense the mother’s wrongs !  
“ — Oh, Adelaide ! — had I sooner  
“ become sensible of thy virtues  
“ we had both been happy !

“ Amelia, that cruel sister, has  
“ undone me ! — like a dark fiend  
“ she seduced my weak unguarded  
“ heart to the false pleasures of al-  
“ luring vice ; — whilst thou, bright  
“ seraph, robed in innocence, and  
“ blooming with matchless beauty,  
“ stretched in vain thy lovely hand  
“ to save me ! — Had fate permit-  
“ ed me extent of life, thou wouldst  
“ have beheld low at thy feet a  
“ suppliant lover and repentant  
N 2                      “ husband

“ husband — but, doomed to fall  
 “ the victim of my crimes, the  
 “ ecstatic bliss of thy pronounced  
 “ forgiveness is denied even in the  
 “ decisive hour of death ! — The  
 “ music of thy voice would have  
 “ allayed the pang of anguish, and  
 “ soothed the horrors of a dying  
 “ moment—Bless her, oh gracious  
 “ heaven ! and receive into thy  
 “ mercy the deluded soul who,  
 “ with fervent penitence, implores  
 “ thy pardon !” — He spoke — he  
 sighed — he died ! — Le Claire  
 quitted not the remains of his loved  
 master till he saw them deposited  
 in hallowed earth. Madame de  
 Miran, in the agonies of despair  
 at his loss, had caused his funeral  
 obsequies



obsequies to be performed with solemn pomp; and had absolutely refused her permission for his body to be removed to France. When Le Claire dwelt upon the tender subject of St. Aubin's affecting sensibility for me, the torrent of my tears gushed out—they afforded me a temporary relief, and enabled me to ask him if he had unfolded this sad event by the command of Amelia?—He answered in the affirmative; and that, having peremptorily denied his humble request—that she would spare him a commission, for which he was ill qualified—and urged her in vain to break it cautiously, either by her presence or her pen, she had im-

posed on him the painful task, and charged him with this additional information, which the poor man uttered reluctantly — that, as I had by my wayward humours banished her brother from his native country, and had consequently been the cause of his miserable and shameful death, I had no longer any right to claim protection from the Viscount de St. Aubin. That our alliance was now dissolved, and he expected me to quit, in a few days, a residence I had enjoyed already unmolested but too long: and that she did not doubt but my parents would generously provide for their widowed runaway,

since

since the cause of her disobedience, having become the victim of my imprudence, was now no more. — “ Yes,” cried I, animated with indignation, “ voluntarily shall I resign a dependence  
 “ to which I would prefer the most  
 “ savage desert. — Tell this implacable, this inhuman sister, that, sensible it is to her I owe all my miseries, I attribute to her malice the inconstancy of my wronged husband, and his fatal end ! —  
 “ Tell her that beggary is preferable to her assistance ; and that, though my justly offended parents were to carry their resentment beyond his grave to the  
 “ widow of St. Aubin, and should

“ spurn their wretched daughter  
 “ from their feet, she would sink  
 “ a prey to poverty and want, ra-  
 “ ther than accept from her hands  
 “ the smallest pittance to allay her  
 “ hunger.”

Though the distraction of my  
 mind was little calculated to express  
 my sentiments on paper, yet I con-  
 sidered that my duty demanded my  
 giving immediate information to  
 my mother of my present unfortu-  
 nate situation, conjuring her to  
 plead for her wretched daughter;  
 and presuming to hope that, since  
 those ties were fatally broken which  
 had justly occasioned the resent-  
 ment of my parents, I might be  
 blessed with their forgiveness ere  
 I sunk

I sunk down in sorrow to the grave! Intrusting my letter to the conveyance of Le Claire, I waited the event of this last effort with unutterable anguish!—I attempted not to go to bed, but assisted my two attendants in packing up my apparel ready for a final removal from Belle-vue, where I determined not to remain another day, whatever were the consequences. The insulting commands of Amelia, to resign a habitation to which the unhappy widow of her brother was surely no less entitled than his forsaken wife, had roused my pride and indignation, sentiments which no doubt prevented my wounded spirit

spirit from yielding to the oppressive weight of accumulated woe !

Le Claire returned not till near four in the morning, as he found, on his arrival in Paris, my father's house shut up ; and received information that the family had resided for some months entirely in the country. Having obtained a direction to their abode, he lost no time in pursuing a journey of so much consequence to me ; and had the satisfaction of bringing me a letter, which he hoped would prove a consolation to my distress. I thanked and rewarded my faithful messenger for his diligence :—taking, with trembling hands, this dreaded

dreaded letter, I found the welcome, unhopèd-for offer of an asylum under my parental roof, upon condition that I resumed the name of Tourville, and resigned all future acquaintance with St. Aubin's family. — The latter was an injunction I had no temptation to resist—the former was a circumstance too indifferent to me to refuse. The next day their carriage drove to the door, and I quitted a mansion where I had passed the happiest and most wretched of my days. One tie alone attached my lingering heart to Belle-vue—I could not, without regret, for ever leave the remains of my lost child ! I shed my last tear upon his grave,  
and



and tore myself eternally from an object which, while it fed my sorrows, soothed their anguish.—My mother received me with encircling arms; — she led me trembling into the presence of my father—I sunk at his feet, not daring to lift up my eyes to meet his awful frown—“ Oh, forgive! forgive!” was all I could articulate. — He deigned to raise me with relenting kindness — “ Thy misfortunes, and thy repentance, Adelaide,” said he, “ have expiated thy fault:—thou art forgiven!”—I kissed with transport his extended hand — “ Ah,” cried my mother, “ how she is changed! her emaciated form scarce bears the semblance of her former self.

“ — Come,

“ — Come, my poor child, and let  
 “ the balm of comfort once more  
 “ revisit thy much injured heart !  
 “ the story of thy wrongs are all  
 “ confirmed in those sunk eyes,  
 “ and that wan cheek !” — She  
 folded me in her maternal arms,  
 and wiped the tears that in abundance  
 rolled.—To this dear parent I  
 unbofomed all my griefs — sweet  
 pity melted in her gentle heart !—  
 but foon fhe taught me, from the  
 mild reasoning of true religion,  
 that refignation to the will of heaven,  
 from which the inexperienced  
 ear of youth too often turns.

I now hoped to have devoted  
 my remaining days to watch, with  
 duteous care, the declining years  
 of

of those beloved parents, whose tender affection for their erring child seemed to bury in oblivion all the fatal past!—I flattered myself my filial attentions might in some degree compensate for the disappointment I had caused them—but alas!—the measure of my misfortunes was yet to be completed!—too soon the most painful task of duty claimed my care!—to smooth the bed of sickness—to alleviate the pang of death!—these were the mournful offices which succeeded a husband's murder!—my father was seized with a malady, which baffled all the power of medicine—it threatened immediate dissolution, and prepared my  
exemplary

exemplary mother for an eternal separation!—My terrors upon the prospect of an event too certain, from the rapid progress of this disorder, superseded even the anxious fears I had secretly indulged upon her account.—The symptoms of a decaying constitution made me anticipate, with dread, a mother's fate:—but my father's sudden and nearer danger engrossed every fear and every care for him!—I never quitted this dear, this dying parent—but watched constantly by his bed-side, silently invoking heaven with fervent prayers to spare his valued life.—I administered every remedy during the short absences of my mother, which

which he received from my hands with looks of speechless gratitude — I had just assisted him to change the posture of his restless head — he gazed upon me with expressive tendernefs — he pressed me with his clay-cold hand — and in an instant breathed within my arms his last expiring sigh! —

At this awful moment my bursting soul seemed ready to break through the limits of mortality, and, quivering on the wings of life, to take its flight with his who gave me being! — but the recollection of a remaining claim upon my duty banished the impious wish.

I sought my widowed mother in an adjoining room, whither she  
had

had not been long retired before the partner of her heart was sunk to final sleep :—she was resting on her knees, her eyes were raised to heaven !—but her whole mind, animated by devotion, spoke in her countenance. — I was silent, not daring to interrupt her sacred meditation ! — at length, suddenly turning towards me, as I stood weeping by, she arose ; and, tenderly wiping my trickling tears—  
 “ I read, my child, in your affliction,” said she, assuming a firmness of voice—“ that hope is now  
 “ no more — thou hast closed a  
 “ father’s eyes. Alas, my Adelaide !  
 “ — how enviable the fate we  
 “ mourn,—the dead are happy—  
 VOL. II. O “ the

“ the living only wretched ! — I  
 “ have prayed for resignation ; and,  
 “ I thank heaven, I feel at this  
 “ moment its gracious support—  
 “ soon, very soon, we shall be re-  
 “ united — what rapture in the  
 “ thought, were it not for the  
 “ sad reflection that thou must be  
 “ left an unprotected orphan in a  
 “ barbarous world ! — but, my be-  
 “ loved daughter,” looking sted-  
 fastly at me with a penetrating  
 eye, — “ let religion be thy guide,  
 “ thy monitor, thy friend — and  
 “ thou wilt never miss the empty  
 “ shade of friendship.”

I could only answer with my  
 tears — she strained me to her  
 arms, and thus continued — “ for-  
 “ bear, my child, to move me —  
 “ my



“ my resolution shakes — I must  
 “ withdraw a little to confirm my  
 “ strength of mind, but will rejoin  
 “ you soon, my love ! ” — So say-  
 ing, this incomparable woman, re-  
 commending me tenderly to the  
 care of a faithful and favourite do-  
 mestic, who had been my nurse,  
 and ordering not to be interrupted  
 unless she rang her bell, retired to  
 her closet, where she continued  
 some hours. — As she had taken no  
 refreshment since the morning, I  
 began to be anxious when the  
 hour of seven struck — I ventured  
 to approach the door, notwith-  
 standing her prohibition, and gently  
 tapt — she opened it herself — her  
 face was pale, her voice was lan-

guid ;—but she endeavoured to assume a cheerful aspect. — Ninon followed me with a bouillon ; she swallowed it in compliance with my entreaties ; but assured me, pressing my hand, that she found herself drowsy, and the composure of sleep was all she wanted.—I urged her to go to bed ; but she preferred resting on a couch in her closet—we assisted her in reclining upon it ; and, in opposition to her entreaties that I would leave her, I placed myself at her feet to watch her slumbers—she raised her head from the pillow, fixed upon me a heavenly animated smile, which I never shall forget — and sunk into a gentle sleep.—I contemplated the  
sweet

sweet serenity of her countenance  
 till the shades of night obscured  
 her from my view — Ninon was  
 approaching with a light, but I  
 waved my hand, and pointed to  
 her to place it in the antichamber.  
 — Another hour I watched, till two  
 or three deep sighs made me fear  
 she slept uneasy ; I fetched the can-  
 dle ; and, putting it on a cabinet,  
 made a gentle effort to turn her ;  
 her hands were cold and clammy,  
 and big drops of water ran down  
 her face ; — terrified, I screamed —  
 Ninon flew from the adjoining  
 room — the good Ninon, who in-  
 stantly discovered the fatal truth,  
 attempted to pour a cordial into  
 her mouth, but ineffectually ! —

her jaw was fixed, and her eyes closed for ever!—Now was my misery complete! and one fatal day deprived me of those dear protectors I had so late regained! — I continued some days in a state of stupefaction — nor could all the affectionate zeal of my poor Ninon dissipate my grief. — The arrival of Monsieur de Tourville, the nephew of my father, roused me from this lethargy of woe—I could not refuse to see him; he was appointed sole executor; and from him I was obliged to learn the decision of the will. I found my unfortunate marriage had entirely altered my father's plan in regard to the disposition of his fortune: — but he  
bequeathed

bequeathed every thing to me, on condition that I accepted the hand of his nephew — otherwise, I was only entitled to a third of his money : the remainder, with his estates, devolved to Monsieur de Tourville, in case of my refusal. I need not mention this was the destined husband of my father's choice—Had my dear parents survived my term of mourning, it was no doubt their intention to present again this long - selected lover to my acceptance ; but their tender consideration for a grief, which, though I never ventured to express, was yet visible in my countenance, prompted them to forbear

touching on a subject which must wound a yet bleeding heart.

My cousin was a man of figure and address; and seemed little prepared for the indignity of a second rejection. However, as I had unalterably determined never again to yield my widowed hand, I hesitated not to assure him, that though I esteemed his character, and revered my father's choice, yet, from an inviolable attachment to the memory of my husband, I never could enter into a second engagement; adding, that I voluntarily submitted to the resignation of a forfeit fortune; wishing him with another that happiness which it was not in the power of a broken heart  
to

to bestow ! — The unconditional money I found myself intitled to was amply sufficient to procure me every elegance of life, were I capable, in the dejected state of my mind, to enjoy affluence ; and I murmured not at a decision which my breach of duty had fully justified.—My spirits, subdued by repeated misfortunes, sought shelter from the world in retirement and devotion.

Pardon me if I have dwelt too minutely on a detail you exacted from me.—The recital of calamities, so recently endured, have inadvertently flowed from the pen of sorrow.

Thus,



Thus, my beloved Henrietta, have I revealed each circumstance of my yet short life; and proved, by my fatal experience, the punishments that wait on filial disobedience!—Your affection alone is left to attach me to the world.—Disappointed in the tenderest love—torn from the assiduities of duty—what tie but that of friendship yet remains!—If, after a tale of woe like mine, you can propose any pleasure in the society of its unfortunate heroine, I will consent to forsake for you a seclusion which, when I entered, I never meant to quit.—But spare me, my Henrietta, the pang of witnessing those solemn rites which would recall a  
 day

day to my remembrance I would for ever banish from my thoughts—I will obey the first summons that proclaims you a happy wife.—On my devoted head may every misery, resulting from an ill-fated marriage, have justly been exhausted.

On your propitious hymen may smiling peace, domestic harmony, and mutual love, for ever wait; and time alone dissolve the tender union!

Such are the wishes—such the ardent prayers of

The unfortunate,

But faithful,

ADELAIDE.

When Madame de St. Aubin, whom we shall hereafter distinguish by that name, which she now resumed, had made the Marchioness partaker of this interesting discovery, she requested permission to present Augustus in his new character. — Julia blushed, from the recollection of their last interview, but could not refuse admittance to the son of her beloved friend! — she approached her with trembling awe; — but she sealed his pardon with so sweet a smile, and congratulated him upon the denouement of his birth with such unaffected pleasure, that he felt restored to new life. — Not so the young Viscountess — she received the information

formation with a secret mortification—her antipathy to Madame de Tourville predominated over the pride of rank on the occasion.—The conscious hauteur and arrogant contempt she had shewn for her opinion could not reconcile her to the respect that was due to the mother of her husband.—She returned a cold salute for her maternal embrace; and, with a reserved formality, felicitated the new Viscount de St. Aubin. — Augustus approached Leonora with an air of tender satisfaction, and assured her that his happiness, upon so flattering a discovery, derived its source from the affections of his heart, since it had given to him  
the

the most amiable of mothers, and restored that rank to a lovely wife which the late uncertainty of his descent had cruelly obscured. —

With a satyrical smile she answered

— “ That your dubious birth is

“ thus decided with the array of

“ exterior honours — I rejoice for

“ your own sake — it was otherwise

“ totally indifferent to the daughter

“ of the Baron de Neuville, who,

“ reflecting splendour by her own

“ alliance, could not be herself de-

“ graded.” — With this equivocal

reply she turned haughtily away,

and retired from the joyous buz of

gratulations in which her incon-

stant heart bore so little share. —

The Marquis, the Marchioness, and

their

their brother, offered their compliments on the occasion with well-counterfeited satisfaction; but Monsieur and Madame de Senanges sympathized in this event with all the natural warmth of undissembled friendship.

As the next day was to be the day of general separation, the lovely widow, whose every action was regulated by the most scrupulous and delicate propriety, had predetermined to pay her sons the respect of appearing at the table, and to pass the last evening in the public society of her friends.—The interesting event which had opened to her beloved Tourville a scene of present rapture and future compensation

sation for a life of sorrow, by the unhopèd-for restoration of a long-lost son, gave to her depressed heart a ray of soothing pleasure, and she joined the assembly in the saloon with an air of contentment, if not of happiness.—She entered with that unassuming, natural dignity, which was inseparable from her every movement; and advanced to meet the Marchioness, with whom the present was the first interview.—This haughty woman was prepared to view her with the arrogance of rival charms and jealous consequence;—but the sweet smile that beamed benignant in the eyes of Julia, and animated the magic graces of her features, had the wondrous



wondrous power to subdue, by a momentary impulse of conscious inferiority, that vain pride which swelled her heart.—But envy soon dispelled the transient virtue—and Julia's beauty, too radiant for the eye of malice, effaced the impression that her condescension had made.

When she approached the young Viscountess with her congratulations she affectionately embraced her—"Joy to my Leonora," she softly said:—"may the event of  
 "this interesting day be a prelude  
 "to future added blessings—and  
 "may Madame de St. Aubin, as she  
 "is the loveliest, be long the happiest of wives!"——

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P

Leonora,

Leonora, from the conscious reproaches of her own ungrateful mind, looked evidently abashed—she blushed her thanks, and turned from the Marchioness with embarrassed precipitation.—The anxious mother of Augustus, drawing him apart to have a short conference with him previous to the hour of general meeting, mildly remonstrated with him upon his neglects towards his fair wife : — “ Think  
 “ not, my son,” said she, “ that  
 “ I mean to usurp, from parental  
 “ privilege, controul over your ac-  
 “ tions : — hear me not as a mo-  
 “ ther, but the tenderest friend : —  
 “ one who would guide you through  
 “ the

“ the intricate path obscured by  
 “ guilty passion!—Let not the un-  
 “ fortunate prepossession of your  
 “ heart influence you to treat Leo-  
 “ nora with cruel disregard—you  
 “ received her from the hand of a  
 “ doating father—he reposed in  
 “ you implicit confidence—he re-  
 “ signed to you his dearest trea-  
 “ sure!—be faithful to the trust!—  
 “ beware of setting her an example  
 “ of indifference, which, in wound-  
 “ ing her tenderness, may betray  
 “ her into some fatal weakness!—  
 “ Let your strict adherence to the  
 “ solemn vows which joined you  
 “ at the altar preserve her faith  
 “ inviolate!—let her find in her  
 “ husband the protector of her in-

“nocence — the guardian of her  
 “honour!”—She paused—“I bow  
 “to your merited rebukes,” replied  
 Augustus, “conscious of my er-  
 “ror. — Yes, Madam, my heart,  
 “enslaved even to fascination by  
 “one too lovely-object, has forgot  
 “the duties which engaged him in  
 “a voluntary union to another. —  
 “The mind which derives from  
 “you its being shall learn to emu-  
 “late your virtues. — From Ade-  
 “laide’s unprecedented wrongs her  
 “son shall learn the justice due to  
 “Leonora. — My future conduct  
 “shall atone my fault; and though  
 “my affections are irrevocably fix-  
 “ed, never will they tempt me to  
 “betray the vow which honour  
 “renders

“ renders binding.— Oh, my sweet  
 “ monitrefs!” raising to his lips  
 Madame de St. Aubin’s hand,  
 “ never can my mother plead in  
 “ vain!” — She smiled upon Au-  
 gustus with fond delight, while the  
 tear of pleasure trickled from her  
 eye.—With these tender impres-  
 sions he followed her into the saloon.

The etiquette of the separate  
 routes which the parting families  
 were to take had been previously  
 settled—Monsieur and Madame de  
 St. Aubin were to return to the  
 Baron de Neuville’s, when the Mar-  
 chioness and their mother accom-  
 panied the Count and Countess to  
 Senanges.

Augustus secretly rejoiced in his approaching departure, as the vicinity of the Baron's mansion to that of the Count would give him frequent opportunities of beholding his adored Julia; but Leonora, with regret, quitted a spot which, from the dangerous presence of Henry de Soissons, was become too interesting — she dreaded to encounter the penetrating eye of a father whose virtuous precepts, the fatal principles she had now imbibed, taught her to consider as the severe restrictions of rigorous age.

The new Marchioness and the ill-judging Leonora attempted not to conceal the mutual reluctance with which they parted; but openly  
lamented

lamented that the dull forms of duty which recalled the latter to her father obliged them to submit to a temporary separation.—And, without even referring to the opinion of Augustus, she promised to join the Marchioness at Paris the moment she could release herself from parental bondage.—Monsieur de St. Aubin observed, with astonishment, an affectation of levity of which he had hitherto thought the innocent heart of Leonora incapable. At first he considered this newly-assumed character as an artful manœuvre to recall his attentions. Conscious of having treated her with indifference he secretly reproached himself with his ingra-



titude to a wife who he imagined truly loved him ; and determined to render himself more worthy her affections . — Little did he conceive the attachment she had professed for him capable of change ; much less could he suspect that she had already transferred her inconstant heart to his unworthy rival ! — He took her tenderly by the hand — “ Permit me to hope, my Leonora,” said he, “ that there are ties even “ stronger than parental ones ; and “ that, should the converse of a fa- “ ther grow insipid, the attentions “ of a husband may restore to soli- “ tude its former charms.” — Withdrawing her hand with a haughty air, which she changed into a smile of  
 of

of contempt—"Perhaps, Sir," said she, "those attentions may be found  
 "under the roof of the Baron de  
 "Neuville, since they followed us  
 "not to the Chateau de Soissons."—  
 Monsieur de St. Aubin, struck with  
 the justice of this rebuke, made no  
 reply. — Julia, though unobserved,  
 partook of his confusion ; and too  
 well convinced she had been herself  
 the innocent but fatal cause of his  
 indifference, felt upon her cheek a  
 conscious glow, and in her eye a  
 trembling tear!—She conceived that  
 Leonora entertained a secret jealousy  
 on her account — but it was a real  
 misapprehension which the delicacy  
 of her sentiments occasioned ; the  
 conduct of these unfortunate and vir-  
 tuous

tuous lovers was too guarded to create even the shadow of suspicion.

The Baron embraced his children at their return with transport.--He had constantly received immediate intimation of the minutest events relative to the discovery made by the late Marquis, who had honourably confided with the Baron, previous to their marriage, the important secret of his adopted son's mysterious birth.

An express having informed Monsieur de Neuville the preceding day of the real name and descent of Augustus, he welcomed him most affectionately ; rejoicing, for his sake, that the cloud which had obscured his fate some days was so happily dispersed.

dispersed.—In vain the Viscount endeavoured, by tender and constant assiduities, to raise the drooping spirits of his wife—she received them with forbidding coldness, and even appeared disgusted by all his attempts to please her : his reign was past—his power no more !—the sudden impression to which her easy heart had yielded was quite extinguished by a stronger flame—that transient love which once she bore Augustus now warmed her bosom with a guilty passion !

The partial fondness of a father soon perceived this change in Leonora ; with anxious sorrow he marked the settled gloom upon her brow ;—that sweetness which once  
gave

gave added graces to her beauty had yielded place to lowering discontent. The Baron strictly scrutinized the conduct of his son, and could find no source for her displeasure in the most unremitted attentions of a husband. — He reproved her one day for an alteration of humour so extraordinary and unreasonable — instead of the gentle timidity with which she was accustomed to receive his admonitions, she replied, with a spirit that astonished him, that she was of opinion the prerogative of a parent ceased when a husband's reign commenced; to whom alone she now considered herself accountable for any of her actions. — She quitted him at the  
close

close of this speech, and left the good old man in a consternation not to be described !— He ordered his carriage, after deliberating a few moments, and repaired to the Chateau de Senanges, where he requested a private interview with Madame de St. Aubin. With tears he lamented this sudden and amazing alteration of temper in his daughter, whose mildness of disposition, and dutiful affection for him, had formed the most amiable traits of her character.—Madame de St. Aubin confessed that she had, with concern, made the same observation ; and attributed a deportment so different from her gentleness of nature to the unfortunate intimacy

intimacy she had contracted with the new Marchioness de Soissons. She warned him by all means to stop in its infancy the progress of an acquaintance which had already proved its dangerous influence over the unguarded heart of unsuspecting innocence. — The Baron returned home with a full resolution to follow Madame de St. Aubin's advice, and to prohibit any further intercourse with so deceitful a friend—but how was he chagrined to find that the young Viscountess had been set out for Paris half an hour before his arrival, in compliance with the request of the Marchioness de Soissons, who came herself to fetch her. He immediately

ately



ately inquired whether Monsieur de St. Aubin had accompanied his daughter; but was informed that he was not yet returned from the chace, and that Madame was only attended by her woman and one domestic.

The Baron waited with impatience his son's return; who no sooner entered than he expressed his dissatisfaction at the conduct of Leonora. The Viscount, equally surpris'd and concerned at this extraordinary step, attempted to vindicate an action his heart totally disapproved:—but the Baron, too thoroughly exasperated against her, told him that, though in pleading for his wife he proved his affection

tion and tendernefs, yet regard for his own honour fhould urge him to exert a proper fpirit upon the occafion, and to forbid the imprudent continuance of a friendship already fo fatal in its effects. Monsieur de St. Aubin, convinced by thefe arguments, refolved to fet out the next morning to prevail upon Leonora to accompany him home. The Baron applauded his intention, and impatiently waited the expected return of his daughter. Monsieur de St. Aubin found his fair wife engaged in a crowd of company, who were fluttering round her toilet. The Chevalier de Soiffons was the envied man who feemed honoured with her moft peculiar notice ;

tice; he was breathing adulation in her ear, when Monsieur de St. Aubin, being announced, instantly entered her dressing-room. Her countenance, which had been animated with the pride of beauty and the homage of its votaries, now became tinged with the glow of indignation, and her brow lowered with the frown of resentment. The Viscount affected a gay unconcern, saluted the company with his accustomed ease, and presented to Leonora a letter from her father.—She half perused it; then, tossing it carelessly upon the toilet, she told her woman to put the dull epistle by; and that, if ever she found her in a moralizing humour, she might re-

mind her of the insipid lesson, when it would be more efficacious than at present : then turning to her lord — “ I find,” said she, “ that  
 “ you have been persuaded by the  
 “ Baron de Neuville to expect my  
 “ return with you : tell him that  
 “ when I am weary of the joys of  
 “ public life, I shall fly to the  
 “ asylum he generously offers me ;  
 “ but, that I am positively so  
 “ tired of sylvan scenes and domestic circles, that I shall remain  
 “ at present where I am.” — The Chevalier de Soissons thought propriety now required his absence : and, bowing to the Viscountess and Marchioness, he took his leave, with a conceited shrug of the  
 shoulders,

shoulders, and a sarcastic smile at the latter. His example was followed by the whole train of *petit maitres*, who formed this trifling group. — The Marchioness only remained—she was departing; but a significant nod from Leonora determined her to stay, even in defiance of the Viscount's wish to be left alone with her friend, which he expressed by holding the door open in his hand for her to pass. “ See, Sir,” said Madame de St. Aubin, rising and traversing the room with agitation, “ to what  
 “ your intrusion has exposed me!—  
 “ you have succeeded in rendering  
 “ us both ridiculous: could no  
 “ other instant but the present have  
 Q<sub>2</sub> “ been

“ been favourable to the caprices  
 “ of a father? How absurd! to  
 “ expect a young and married  
 “ woman will submit to the hu-  
 “ mours of old age, and live im-  
 “ mured in solitude, while youth,  
 “ rank, and beauty, all combine  
 “ to make the world delightful!—  
 “ If you, Sir, have imbibed, from  
 “ the Baron’s arguments, such ob-  
 “ solete unnatural maxims, you  
 “ will find yourself deceived and  
 “ disappointed; since I am resolved  
 “ to retrieve lost pleasures by  
 “ partaking amply of every amuse-  
 “ ment from which I have hi-  
 “ therto been secluded.” — “ In-  
 “ deed,” cried the Marchioness,  
 “ it is high time Madame de St.  
 “ Aubin

“ Aubin should be allowed a choice  
 “ of her own ; and she cannot  
 “ confer on me a greater obligation  
 “ than by permitting me to intro-  
 “ duce such an ornament to the  
 “ world.”— “ Madam,” interrupt-  
 ed Augustus, “ were the Viscountess  
 “ de St. Aubin of a birth and rank  
 “ so obscure as to require the coun-  
 “ tenance of a lady who claims  
 “ only from her title an imaginary  
 “ equality with herself, then an in-  
 “ troduction, even under the shadow  
 “ of such a wing, might reflect a  
 “ superficial honour. — But since  
 “ Leonora de Neuville claims, by  
 “ the blood from which she springs,  
 “ a reception in the most distin-  
 “ guished circles of the great,



“ she needs no borrowed lustre.” —  
 The rage of the Marchioness was  
 too great for utterance — it spoke  
 only in the vivid lightning of her  
 eyes. — Augustus, turning to Leo-  
 nora, thus proceeded : — “ If you  
 “ have a wish to make some resi-  
 “ dence in Paris, suffer me to pre-  
 “ pare a situation more eligible in  
 “ a habitation of your own : — re-  
 “ turn only with me to an expect-  
 “ ing father, and you shall com-  
 “ mand my actions and my for-  
 “ tune.” — “ No, Sir,” replied  
 Madame de St. Aubin with indig-  
 nation, “ I am resolutely deter-  
 “ mined not to quit this house till  
 “ you have provided a mansion fit  
 “ for my reception. — The friend-  
 “ ship

“ ship of Madame de Soissons will  
 “ more than compensate the unrea-  
 “ sonable displeasure of a father.—  
 “ Farewell, Sir; the Marchioness’s  
 “ carriage waits; we are engaged—  
 “ excuse my abrupt departure.”—

She turned from him with an air  
 of composed haughtiness; and St.  
 Aubin was so astonished and con-  
 founded at her stubborn resistance,  
 that he permitted her to lead, and  
 her companion to follow, without  
 interruption: he therefore threw  
 himself into his chariot, and re-  
 turned overwhelmed with disap-  
 pointment to the retreat of the Ba-  
 ron, who, attracted by the rapid  
 sound of wheels, was looking from  
 a window. — Unprepared for the

Q 4                      absolute

absolute refusal of his daughter, he had formed his naturally placid countenance into an awful frown to meet the beauteous fugitive : it was not dispelled upon the Viscount's informing him in the softest terms that he found Leonora so very anxious to continue a few days in Paris ; he could not resist her entreaties. The Baron shook his head — “ Augustus,” said he, “ you will repent this weakness ; “ she imposes on your easy nature, “ and triumphs in her power ; — but “ believe me, in yielding against “ your judgment to the extravagant wishes of a wife, you hoard “ up a future fund of wretchedness “ for both ! — Yet, if no persuasion “ will

“ will prevail upon the refractory  
 “ girl to return without absolute  
 “ compulsion to this tranquil scene,  
 “ I cannot see her innocence be-  
 “ come the prey of so vitiated a  
 “ woman as the Marchioness. — I  
 “ will myself accompany you to  
 “ Paris, when a house is procured  
 “ fit for our reception.—Let us  
 “ hasten, my son, to protect her  
 “ virtue from the wily snares of  
 “ vice, disguised under the mask  
 “ of pleasure, and snatch her from  
 “ destruction!” — The Viscount  
 bowed a silent assent; the habita-  
 tion of the Baron had charms for  
 him, which he could not think of  
 resigning without regret; yet his  
 reason could not but approve of  
 the

the propofal : — the maître d'hôtel, therefore, was charged with the commiffion of fixing upon an elegant houfe, completely furnifhed with the utmoft difpatch. — The next day the Count de Senanges and Madame de St. Aubin vifited the Baron : the Countefs quitted not the beauteous widow, who, from motives of prudence rather than decorum, declined being of the party—ſhe could not ſhun without particularity the dangerous prefence of Auguſtus, at Senanges; but ſhe delicately reſolved, under pretence of a neceſſary retirement, during the firſt days of her mourning, to abſent herſelf even from the Baron's, and thereby to avoid ſucceſſive

successive meetings. — Madame de St. Aubin condoled with Monsieur de Neuville upon the positive disobedience of their daughter, but endeavoured to tranquilize his spirits by the flattering prediction, that her reformation would be as rapid as her perversion had been. She mentioned the design of the Count to remove speedily to Paris with his family, which would naturally point out Madame de Senanges as the person to introduce the young Viscountess with proper eclat ; and that, by indulging her inclinations for gaiety within the restrictions of reason and innocence, it would be found less difficult to allienate her from the uneligible friendship

friendship of the artful Marchioness.—Augustus heard, with an irresistible pleasure, that the object of his adoration was to be resident in Paris, during his attendance there upon his wife; and that, under pretence of paying his duty to his mother, he might sometimes be admitted into the presence of his Julia. — In a week the Baron's hôtel was in readiness for his reception, when, accompanied by the Viscount, he set out for Paris; where, upon his arrival, he sent an immediate summons for Leonora, who was engaged in a large party to the theatre that evening. Provoked and mortified at an event for which she was yet unprepared, she



she dispatched a message to her father, informing him that her avocations that day were so numerous she found it impossible to obey his commands till the afternoon, when she would not fail to pay her duty in her way to the new comedy. — The rage of the Baron is not to be described — his first impulse tempted him to fly instantly to the hôtel de Soissons, to load her with reproaches, and to insist upon her immediate return with him.

But the persuasions of Augustus (who by this time knew too well the irritating temper of his wife), prevailed upon him to wait with patience for her voluntary arrival.

—At

—At length she was announced, preceded by the Marchioness, without whose attendance, notwithstanding her acquired spirit, she wanted the courage to appear before her offended father. — She endeavoured to assume an air of confidence; but, in spite of her effrontery, the dreaded presence of her venerable parent awed her tongue to silence. The Baron scarcely deigned a bow to her haughty and intruding companion; but, slowly approaching Leonora, he stood some minutes fixed in the sorrowful contemplation of her figure: — she had put off her mourning for the Marquis de Soissons (though Augustus still wore  
the

the emblems of that grief his heart so truly felt) and sparkled in jewels, with every studied decoration of finished dress.

When the Baron had silently surveyed Madame de St. Aubin, who affected an air of ease and unconcern, overcome by the mingled emotions of grief, affection, and regret, he melted into tears. —  
 “ Alas ! my misguided child ! ” he cried in broken accents, “ could  
 “ I have once conceived that the  
 “ vanities of a false world would  
 “ have allured thee from a father,  
 “ and robbed me of my daughter?  
 “ — Return, return to the  
 “ safe track of innocence from  
 “ which thy erring steps would  
 “ lead

“ lead thee — quit, quit the paths  
 “ of fatal dissipation which thou  
 “ wilt find, too soon, are sown with  
 “ real thorns. — I have resigned  
 “ thee to the protection of a vir-  
 “ tuous husband — with him thou  
 “ mayest securely tread the walk of  
 “ public life, spotless thy honour,  
 “ unimpeached thy fame. — Can  
 “ Leonora wish for any guide but  
 “ her Augustus? — “ If, Sir,” replied  
 she, reddening, “ you allude to the  
 “ preference I have discovered for  
 “ the Marchioness de Soissons, I  
 “ must be under the necessity of  
 “ declaring solemnly that no in-  
 “ fluence whatever is strong enough  
 “ to dissolve a friendship immove-  
 “ able as fate! — My obligations are  
 “ inexpressible

“ expressible—but for her I might  
 “ have still continued buried in  
 “ oblivion, concealed in solitude,  
 “ and been denied the liberty which  
 “ free-born Nature claims.

“ Released from the long cap-  
 “ tivity of childhood, I am deter-  
 “ mined to assert the prerogative of  
 “ every wife, and to enjoy, unre-  
 “ strained, the freedom to which  
 “ I am entitled.”

“ Heaven forbid,” interrupted  
 Monsieur de St. Aubin, taking  
 her by the hand, which she sud-  
 denly withdrew, “ that my Leo-  
 “ nora should find any unjustifiable  
 “ opposition to her pleasures from  
 “ the restraints of a husband who  
 “ is anxious to anticipate the wishes

“ of her heart ; and, in return for  
 “ his attention, every mark of grate-  
 “ ful duty to the most amiable, most  
 “ generous of fathers, will be his  
 “ best, his dearest recompense. —  
 “ The Baron de Neuville, far from  
 “ obstructing your introduction to  
 “ the world, is studying to pro-  
 “ mote it with propriety — this  
 “ house is prepared for you — he  
 “ makes you mistress of it. —  
 “ The Countess de Senanges will  
 “ soon arrive in Paris ; she will be  
 “ happy to share in your amuse-  
 “ ments.” — “ Hold, Sir,” ex-  
 claimed Madame de St. Aubin,  
 “ if I consent to reside here, in  
 “ compliance with the rules of de-  
 “ corum and propriety, it is not  
 “ with

“ with an intention of giving up  
 “ those parties and acquaintance  
 “ which I prefer from choice. —  
 “ Madame de Senanges is free to  
 “ form her own select society —  
 “ so am I : — nor shall I submit to  
 “ be dictated to, even by the Baron  
 “ de Neuville ! — But come, Ma-  
 “ dame de Soissons,” (turning to  
 her silent champion, who seemed  
 to enjoy, with a malicious pleasure,  
 the mischief she had caused) “ we  
 “ shall be late — I must entreat  
 “ your pardon for the liberty I  
 “ have taken in detaining you with  
 “ my family disputes.” — “ Adieu,  
 “ Sir,” turning to her father, “ to-  
 “ morrow you may depend upon  
 “ my acquiescing with your wishes



“ — I shall then, in obedience to  
 “ your commands, remove myself  
 “ to this abode.” — With these  
 words, curtsying ceremoniously,  
 she followed the Marchioness to  
 her carriage. — A profound silence  
 succeeded their departure : — At  
 length the Baron, fixing his eyes  
 with emotion on Augustus, broke  
 into this exclamation : — “ Is it  
 “ possible ! — can I give credit to  
 “ my senses ? — was that a daugh-  
 “ ter ! — or could it be Leonora ! —  
 “ Alas ! I had a child ! — who was  
 “ the dearest comfort of my age ! —  
 “ the blush of innocence, the glow  
 “ of artless beauty, bloomed on  
 “ her cherub cheek ! — the milk of  
 “ sweetness hung upon her tongue.  
 “ — When

“ — When I resigned her to thy  
 “ arms, I thought I had bestowed  
 “ upon thy virtues a treasure that  
 “ would bless thee ! — But, alas !  
 “ I find she was born to curse  
 “ us both ! ” — Monsieur de St.  
 Aubin attempted to console the  
 Baron, and to vindicate a conduct  
 which he attributed to flattered va-  
 nity, to thoughtless youth, and ill-  
 placed friendship. He promised to  
 guard, with watchful tenderness,  
 over her actions, and to dissuade  
 her, by every endearing art, from  
 pursuing in the society of Madame  
 de Soissons the path of ruin ; — not  
 doubting but that the mild remon-  
 strances of true affection would  
 work upon her gentle nature, and

remove the fascinating bandage from her eyes.

The Baron took this opportunity to enter upon another subject very near his heart ; his great soul could not support the idea that his family should take advantage of the late Marquis's generosity, by submitting to the acceptance of a legacy from such unworthy successors.—“ Re-  
 “ sign, my Augustus,” continued he, “ a fortune you can never want  
 “ —let your obligations to that best  
 “ of men survive his existence  
 “ only in your memory.—Thanks  
 “ to heaven I have ample wealth  
 “ to make my children happy—  
 “ share it while I live — possess it  
 “ when I am no more !”

St.

St. Aubin, overcome with the Baron's generosity, sunk on one knee, and bedewed his hand with tears—  
 “ Oh, my father!” he cried, “ a  
 “ forsaken outcast! — abandoned  
 “ even before my birth by my  
 “ own natural parent — how has  
 “ the guardian hand of Provi-  
 “ dence watched over my helpless  
 “ infancy — guided my path of  
 “ youth—and, with each ill of life,  
 “ has mingled blessings;—even in  
 “ the hour when it deprived me  
 “ of the paternal care of one dear  
 “ protector, it ensured to me an-  
 “ other not less worthy of my gra-  
 “ titude and duty. The proposal  
 “ you have made, permit me to

“ confess, has eased my mind of  
 “ an inexpressible weight ; since  
 “ they are your sentiments I hesi-  
 “ tate not to acknowledge they  
 “ have long been mine. Excluded  
 “ as I am from the succession of an  
 “ hereditary patrimony, by the in-  
 “ justice of my ancestors, the pride  
 “ of birth yet animates my mind  
 “ with conscious honour, which  
 “ would prefer a noble poverty to  
 “ a base dependence ; nor would  
 “ owe the riches equity might  
 “ claim to the unwilling hand of  
 “ avarice. An immediate restor-  
 “ ation of a fortune, the acceptance  
 “ of which has poignantly wounded  
 “ my feelings, will complete my  
 “ happiness : let my future obliga-  
 “ tions

“ tions be all confined to the  
 “ boundless generosity of him who  
 “ has honoured me with the name  
 “ of son.” The Baron tenderly  
 embraced the Viscount ; applauded  
 his judgment ; and it was decided  
 that Augustus, on the succeeding  
 day, should resign all pretensions  
 to the late Marquis’s liberality, by  
 a public declaration. The sordid  
 Soissons, to whose narrow soul a  
 sentiment of delicacy and genero-  
 sity was totally unknown, received  
 with surprise, avidity, and tran-  
 sport, so welcome a proposal. He  
 embraced Monsieur de St. Aubin,  
 and expressed, for the first time in  
 his life, some cordial wishes for his  
 prosperity and happiness. Leonora  
 returned

returned to her husband and her father, with visible reluctance, secretly resolving not to be less frequent in her appearances in public. Not all the prohibitions of the Baron, nor the gentle remonstrances of Augustus, could prevail upon her to avoid the Marchioness; her obstinate friendship for that lady was assisted by a still stronger inclination — her fatal prepossession for Henry de Soissons daily increased. — Infatuated by an unresisted passion, every party in his absence was insipid; he was a constant attendant on his sister; he knew his power; and, by his insinuating attentions to the beautiful Leonora, fanned the conscious flame.



flame. Augustus soon discovered, notwithstanding their caution in his presence, the hitherto unsuspected secret. He read, in the mutual language of their eyes, the fatal passion, but determined, though it increased his vigilance, to impose upon his lips eternal silence. His heart was too tenderly attached to the object of his early love to be sensible of a jealous wound from the idea of a rival; he felt, from sad experience, the influence of reason could boast but little sway over the irresistible affections of the heart. Leonora, instead of exciting his resentment, claimed his generous pity; and, confident that the native virtue of her mind secured her

honour,

honour, he contented himself with being prepared to defend her innocence from any advantage which Monsieur de Soissons might presume to hope from the assurance of his conquest. But he was anxiously solicitous to conceal this discovery from the knowledge of the Baron, who would have received the intelligence with all the horror of a Roman father. Nicely tenacious of his house's honour, Augustus was well convinced that Monsieur de Neuville would treat with implacable severity his unfortunate daughter; and might possibly, by confining her closely in the country, render her desperate. In a few days the Count and Countess

tefs arrived at Paris, accompanied  
 by the lovely widow and Madame  
 de St. Aubin : the latter received  
 an early visit from the Baron, who  
 informed her of the resignation her  
 son, with his approbation, had con-  
 firmed. She highly applauded a  
 circumstance which she had herself  
 most ardently wished to take place,  
 acquainting Monsieur de Neuville  
 that she had formed hopes of her  
 son's alliance proving more worthy  
 of his, by the acquisition of a for-  
 tune to which he was the legal heir.  
 She had made inquiries after Ma-  
 demoiselle de St. Aubin, who had  
 succeeded on the decease of her  
 father to the whole estate and wealth  
 of the late Viscount; and, having  
 passed

passed in pleasure and dissipation a long term of years, she had lately retired, disgusted with the world, into a convent, to devote the remnant of her life to the duties of a religion whose precepts her whole conduct had openly disavowed. The rumours of Monsieur de St. Aubin's discovered birth, and of his mother's having again resumed that name, had spread through Paris; and there was no doubt but it would reach the ears of Amelia, which must prepare her for a claim that her much wronged sister was resolved to make. An unexpected opportunity soon offered itself for the execution of this just design — Madame de St. Aubin was informed

formed on evening that a woman wished to speak with her upon business of importance to her family. Upon requesting her to send her name, she replied, with some hesitation, that it was now La Motte; but the lady could only recollect her by that of Nanette. A thousand sad ideas at this instant rushed into Madame de St. Aubin's mind, and recalled past scenes of misery; but the hopes of making some interesting discovery rendered her eager to admit her former domestic. She entreated Monsieur de Senanges to be present at the interview, and ordered her to appear.—Pale and trembling Nanette obeyed the summons, throwing herself at the feet

feet of Madame de St. Aubin, who mildly requested her to rise. The poor creature, casting her eyes fearfully around, and perceiving the Count, rose precipitately, and returned to the door—"Ah!" cried she, "if that is the Viscount de St. Aubin, indeed I cannot face him!"—"It is not, upon my honour," replied Madame de St. Aubin; "it is the Count de Senanges; in whom I have so unreserved a confidence, that he is entitled to be witness of every circumstance relative to my family. Reassure yourself, my good Nanette, and rest satisfied that, whatever discovery you may be encouraged to make, no advantage

“ vantage whatever shall be taken  
 “ against you : rely on my sacred  
 “ promise to reward and not to  
 “ punish you.” — “ Ah !” replied  
 the weeping creature, “ you were  
 “ always too good, too kind to me,  
 “ unworthy as I was ! — But in-  
 “ deed, indeed I had no bad inten-  
 “ tion, and only did as I was bid.

“ Well, Nanette,” replied the  
 lady, “ I heartily forgive you ;  
 “ and only require you to make  
 “ a reparation for any injury you  
 “ may unintentionally have done  
 “ me, by now disclosing every  
 “ event concerning me and mine  
 “ in which you have been engaged,  
 “ or those under whose influence  
 “ you were compelled to act.”



The Count, observing her spirits almost exhausted by the violence of her agitation, humanely placed a chair for her, and ordered some wine to be presented, which revived her spirits sufficiently to proceed as follows :

“ When my mother and I, Ma-  
 “ dam, were appointed to serve  
 “ you at Belle-vue, Mademoiselle  
 “ de St. Aubin, by considerable  
 “ presents and promises, secured us  
 “ to her interest; and we received  
 “ her commands only to obey  
 “ yours, as far as was consistent  
 “ with her pleasure : — she repre-  
 “ sented you to us as an ignomi-  
 “ nious connexion to her brother’s  
 “ illustrious family; and the Vis-  
 “ count’s

“ count’s resentment confirming,  
 “ in our opinion, this circum-  
 “ stance, we imprudently imagined  
 “ our submission to her was an act  
 “ of duty. — My father, indeed,  
 “ judged otherwise : — he said you  
 “ were a sweet lady, and was  
 “ ever extolling your beauty and  
 “ condescension. — You may recol-  
 “ lect, towards the time of your  
 “ confinement, that my mother one  
 “ day asked permission to visit a sick  
 “ relation; you, Madam, kindly  
 “ spared her, little imagining that  
 “ her summons to Paris so nearly  
 “ concerned yourself. — Mademoi-  
 “ selle de St. Aubin having pri-  
 “ vately sent for her, first bribing  
 “ her to secrecy by a considerable  
 S 2                      “ gratuity,

“ gratuity, extorted from her a  
 “ solemn, yet reluctant promise,  
 “ that, if you had a son, we should  
 “ assure you that it died soon after  
 “ its birth, and expose the infant,  
 “ in a basket, on the public road;  
 “ where it was beyond a doubt  
 “ but that some humane passenger  
 “ would compassionately receive  
 “ and nourish it.

“ Barbarous woman! — How  
 “ could a heart so hard expect a  
 “ stranger to undertake a charge  
 “ she cruelly renounced! — My mo-  
 “ ther at first started with horror at  
 “ the proposal! — but threats ope-  
 “ rated more strongly upon her  
 “ fears than promises had upon  
 “ her hopes, and overcame every  
 “ scruple.

“ scruple. — Mademoiselle de St.  
 “ Aubin represented to my mo-  
 “ ther that a son would inherit the  
 “ fortune of his grandfather, and  
 “ consequently deprive her of the  
 “ expectations she had formed from  
 “ the partiality of the Viscount, and  
 “ the disobedience of her brother.

“ These arguments at length  
 “ convinced my mother that she  
 “ should, in fulfilling Mademoi-  
 “ selle de St. Aubin’s injunctions,  
 “ do a just and laudable action : she  
 “ promised every thing, and re-  
 “ turned home determined to be  
 “ guided implicitly by her com-  
 “ mands.—She confided the secret  
 “ with me, but inviolably kept it  
 “ from my father, whose strong

“ attachment to your service the  
“ well knew would prevent and  
“ betray the scheme.

“ When you were taken ill we  
“ had the precaution to send him  
“ on an errand to Paris, which  
“ would detain him a day and a  
“ night; and it was in that fatal  
“ expedition he had the misfortune  
“ to dislocate his leg; which, by  
“ bringing on a slow fever, ter-  
“ minated his life in a few weeks!

“ As soon as your son was born,  
“ we took advantage of your in-  
“ sensibility to remove it to the  
“ most distant quarter of the house.  
“ — I accepted the charge of  
“ nursing it till it could, with  
“ more safety, be disposed of, ac-  
“ cording

“ cording to the cruel commands of  
 “ his unnatural aunt. — Its beauty  
 “ and innocence a thousand times  
 “ tempted me to betray my trust,  
 “ and the confidence placed in  
 “ me : — but my mother carefully  
 “ watched over my motions ; and,  
 “ indeed, I had no other method  
 “ to provide for its protection,  
 “ without risking the discovery of  
 “ Mademoiselle de St. Aubin, and  
 “ thereby incurring her certain ven-  
 “ geance, both upon the unfortu-  
 “ nate victim of her malice and  
 “ myself.

“ When my mother judged it  
 “ might, without danger, be ex-  
 “ posed to the charitable chance to  
 “ which it was destined, she or-

“ dered me to dress it plainly ; and  
 “ as your recovery was yet too du-  
 “ bious for her to quit you with  
 “ propriety, she assigned to me the  
 “ painful office of placing the dear  
 “ infant where it could not be over-  
 “ looked, and then deserting it :—  
 “ but, shrinking with horror at  
 “ such a thought, I determined  
 “ not to return home till I had seen  
 “ it in safe hands, whatever might  
 “ be the consequence.—Instead of  
 “ dressing it as she commanded, I  
 “ chose its richest robe, and a cap  
 “ trimmed with the finest lace :—I  
 “ encircled its waist likewise with a  
 “ ribband, to which hung a gold  
 “ coral, which I had found amongst  
 “ its clothes ; flattering myself that  
 “ these



“ these evident tokens of distinction might prove a benefit, and  
 “ ensure its helpless innocence a  
 “ kind protector.

“ I tenderly kissed the little angel  
 “ after it was dressed, and invoked  
 “ heaven to preserve it. — I then  
 “ fed it plentifully with milk and  
 “ bread ; and, lulling it into a  
 “ deep slumber, hastened out of  
 “ the house, lest my mother should  
 “ make her appearance, and discover  
 “ its ornaments.

“ Reaching the road that led to  
 “ Paris, I was very soon delivered  
 “ from my precious charge : the  
 “ sound of a carriage, and the  
 “ distant view of a large retinue,  
 “ determined me now to try the  
 “ fate

“ fate of my little nursing. — I  
 “ placed it by the side of a hedge,  
 “ and, concealing myself behind,  
 “ waited the event. — The noise of  
 “ the wheels and horses disturbed  
 “ the repose of the affrighted babe!  
 “ — its cries caught the attention  
 “ of the first servant who reached  
 “ the spot : he dismounted, — and,  
 “ lifting up the basket, gazed at  
 “ the child with visible surprise. —  
 “ Its pretty hands extended, seem-  
 “ ed to implore the protection its  
 “ innocence demanded. — By this  
 “ time the equipage drove up, — a  
 “ handsome gentleman was seated  
 “ in it : — he ordered the coachman  
 “ to stop ; and, calling to the ser-  
 “ vant who still held the basket,  
 “ he

“ he took the infant in his arms,  
 “ and seemed to smile on it with  
 “ pleasure and compassion.

“ Though I could not hear dis-  
 “ tinctly what was said, I disco-  
 “ vered that the babe was fortu-  
 “ nately disposed of, and saw it  
 “ received into the carriage, which  
 “ drove rapidly from my sight.  
 “ I made the best of my way home,  
 “ transported with my success : —  
 “ my mother was satisfied with my  
 “ report, and applauded my dili-  
 “ gence.—We both agreed in the  
 “ opinion, that, the better to pre-  
 “ vent your mistrust of the child’s  
 “ death, (which nothing but our  
 “ own conscious deception could  
 “ suppose) we should construct an  
 “ artificial

“ artificial grave. Fortunately we  
 “ put the plan in execution, as you  
 “ were no sooner recovered than  
 “ you persisted in your demand of  
 “ being conducted to it.

“ You, Madam, never suspected  
 “ the imposition, but mourned the  
 “ death of a living infant, whom  
 “ Providence meant one day to re-  
 “ store to your arms!—Thus, my  
 “ honoured mistress, have I at  
 “ length discharged my conscience,  
 “ and confessed how far I have been  
 “ guilty of the theft committed.—  
 “ Never have I enjoyed a mo-  
 “ ment’s real undisturbed repose  
 “ since that period.—My mother  
 “ survived my father but two years.  
 “ —Madame de St. Aubin, to re-  
 “ ward

“ ward me, as she said, for my  
“ diligent and faithful services, but  
“ rather, I believe, to retain me  
“ securely in her interest, portioned  
“ and married me to her steward.—  
“ I have been the mother of seven  
“ children, but have had the mi-  
“ fery to lose them all!—A severe  
“ judgment from that heaven I  
“ offended in bereaving you of  
“ yours! — It is only within three  
“ days that I have learnt the won-  
“ derful discovery made in your  
“ family!—My joy, at the happy  
“ issue of an event which I  
“ have so long so truly deplored  
“ and repented of, had nearly  
“ killed me—I confessed my guilt  
“ to my astonished husband — he  
“ proposed

“ proposed to wait upon you with  
 “ my deposition ;—but I could not  
 “ resist the strong inclination I felt  
 “ to acknowledge, at your injured  
 “ feet, the part I acted in this my-  
 “ terious affair.—Mademoiselle de  
 “ St. Aubin is, I believe, no longer  
 “ ignorant of your wonderful re-  
 “ union with your son :—she has  
 “ commanded my attendance at  
 “ the convent whither she is re-  
 “ tired ; but I was determined to  
 “ make these discoveries to you  
 “ before I encountered her pre-  
 “ sence, that I might inform her  
 “ of the irrevocable confession I  
 “ had made.”

Madame de St. Aubin, who had  
 shed some tender tears during her  
 “ recital,

recital, to the memory of past interesting events, instead of reproaching Nanette for the part she had acted, generously assured her she regarded her as the preserver of her son, and felt herself under the strongest obligations for the precautions she had taken for his safety in the action she was forced to commit: more particularly she expressed her gratitude for her having distinguished her son by the coral, without which the authenticity of his birth would have been confirmed with difficulty.

Madame de St. Aubin added that the discovery Nanette had made should never injure herself or her family, since she would make  
such



such provision for them as would amply recompense any loss she might sustain from the resentment of her patroness. She promised likewise to introduce her to her son, who, she was certain, would not be ungrateful to his nurse.

Madame de St. Aubin, accompanied by the Count, repaired, after her departure, to the Baron de Neuville, to consult with him and Augustus upon the best method to pursue with his cruel aunt ; but a letter, which was delivered to his astonished mother, soon convinced them that they had no difficulties to apprehend from a dying penitent.—It contained the following lines : —

“ Though

“ Though the name of Amelia  
 “ de St. Aubin must be hateful to  
 “ the remembrance of the sister  
 “ she has wronged, she still hopes  
 “ for pardon from the widow of  
 “ her unfortunate brother. Stretch-  
 “ ed on the bed of sickness, and  
 “ hovering on the brink of the  
 “ grave, she implores to be ho-  
 “ noured with the presence of  
 “ Madame de St. Aubin, only  
 “ to restore, through her hands,  
 “ that inheritance to an injured  
 “ nephew of which her crimes  
 “ have too long deprived him.”

Madame de St. Aubin melt-  
 ed into tears. — “ Alas!” said  
 she, “ unfortunate Amelia! may  
 “ heaven forgive as readily as

“ I do.—The justice of Providence  
 “ repays our wrongs : till I had  
 “ recovered the blessing I had lost  
 “ so long, my heart never mur-  
 “ mured at the deprivation of for-  
 “ tune. I alone reproached thee  
 “ for the estranged affections of a  
 “ husband, and that fatal death  
 “ which was its early consequence.”

Madame de St. Aubin was too  
 strongly affected, and felt too great  
 an agitation, to write a reply—but,  
 admitting the steward into her  
 presence, who was the bearer of  
 Amelia's letter, she charged him to  
 assure his mistress that she would  
 attend her the next day, and hoped  
 to find her mended in her health,  
 and tranquil in her spirits.

She

She would have gone alone to pay the mournful visit, but her son, and the Count de Senanges, insisted upon accompanying her, promising that they would not attempt to discompose the dying lady by forcing themselves into her presence. Early in the morning they set out, and reached the convent about noon. They were shewn into the parlour; and one of the nuns, making her appearance at the grate, admitted Madame de St. Aubin, who inquired anxiously after Amelia.—She shook her head  
 “ —Ah truly, by St. Mary, ill  
 “ enough,” replied she; “ but we  
 “ hope much from your presence.  
 “ The whole night she raved of

“ you, and declares her soul will  
 “ be eternally lost if she lives not  
 “ to receive your pardon.—Then  
 “ she talked about an infant and a  
 “ murdered brother.” — “ Poor  
 “ Amelia,” interrupted Madame  
 de St. Aubin, strongly touched by  
 this account, “ thank heaven thou  
 “ hast no crimes of such a nature  
 “ to repent of : absolute guilt is a  
 “ stranger to thy bosom. But come,  
 “ dear sister,” (to the nun) “ shall  
 “ I not be conducted to the cham-  
 “ ber of this poor sufferer !” St.  
 Agnes bowed in silence, and led  
 the way.—The door of the apart-  
 ment was gently opened — St. Ag-  
 nes advanced to the bed, and whis-  
 pered ; — a weak voice replied,—  
“ Ah,

“ Ah, my God ! now is my first  
 “ dreadful trial ! how shall I sup-  
 “ port her injured face :—alas ! she  
 “ was once my friend ! ” — “ And is  
 “ so still,” cried Madame de St.  
 Aubin ; “ witness these unfeigned  
 “ tears—witness my bleeding heart !  
 “ —Look up, Amelia ! view thy  
 “ Adelaide ! ” — As she drew near  
 enough to discover the emaciated  
 form which rested on the bed, she  
 started back with horror — disease  
 seemed to have added to her age  
 at least twenty years ! — Her dimi-  
 nished eyes were almost buried in  
 their hollow sockets ; and the shrunk  
 skin scarce covered the starting  
 bones. It is true, Madame de St.  
 Aubin expected not to find the

vivid bloom which once adorned her cheek — the only thought to find the vestiges of beauty : but not a trace survived to tell the tale of former youth. Amelia perceived the emotions of surprise and horror :

“ Generous Adelaide !” she faintly uttered ; “ you should have been  
 “ prepared for the miserable spec-  
 “ tacle which shocks your gentle  
 “ spirits. Mark, in the state to  
 “ which I am reduced, the dire  
 “ effects of complicated guilt !  
 “ Conscience — that judge which  
 “ never long can sleep — aiding the  
 “ ravage of consuming sickness,  
 “ has changed me to what you  
 “ now behold ! while time restores  
 “ you to my remembrance, with  
 “ every



“ every recollected feature : inno-  
 “ cence has preserved the relics of  
 “ a countenance, which neither the  
 “ trials of adversity nor slow ad-  
 “ vances of age have yet mate-  
 “ rially impaired.—That smile of  
 “ sweet benevolence which graced  
 “ your blooming youth still dwells  
 “ upon your looks, and generously  
 “ proclaims my pardon. — Instead  
 “ of the just reproaches I have  
 “ merited, like a kind angel, you  
 “ bring comfort to my departing  
 “ soul !—Yes, comfort and pity to  
 “ the wretch who, violating every  
 “ sacred tie of honour and of kin-  
 “ dred, pursued your patient vir-  
 “ tues with unnumbered wrongs.”  
 — “ Talk not of wrongs, my dear

“ Amelia,” interrupted her sister,  
 “ my presence would be a barba-  
 “ rous insult, did I not come solely  
 “ to assure you of my warmest  
 “ friendship.” — “ Ah,” cried the  
 sick penitent, “ would not my  
 “ heart with that profaned expres-  
 “ sion ! your friendship having so  
 “ cruelly betrayed, I never can de-  
 “ serve — but your forgiveness my  
 “ repentance claims ; and I thank  
 “ that all-merciful Being, before  
 “ whom I shortly must appear, that  
 “ my contrition is sincere and fer-  
 “ vent ! Behold the sole remain-  
 “ ing method in my power to be-  
 “ come just to that dear son, whom  
 “ my guilt has hitherto deprived  
 “ of his inheritance,” presenting a  
 sealed

sealed packet to Madame de St. Aubin, she thus in broken sentences continued — “ The wealth  
 “ a father left, as he believed, to  
 “ the last surviving heir, is here  
 “ bequeathed to him, or rather is  
 “ resigned ; since, were it possible  
 “ for me to live, I have left my-  
 “ self dependent on his mercy, and  
 “ should become the wretched ob-  
 “ ject of his charity, dispossessed  
 “ of my own fortune, as well as of  
 “ those immense possessions, I have  
 “ too long usurped. My heart  
 “ yearns with tenderness for the  
 “ much - wronged youth. — Oh,  
 “ plead my pardon with this belov-  
 “ ed son ! Could I have dared to  
 “ hope he would commiserate such  
 “ a wretch,

“ a wretch, I would have entreated  
 “ a condescending visit : to have  
 “ traced in him the features of an  
 “ unfortunate brother would have  
 “ soothed the horrors of approach-  
 “ ing death, and yielded a painful  
 “ satisfaction to this repentant  
 “ heart.” — “ Then,” exclaimed  
 Madame de St. Aubin, “ those  
 “ wishes are within your reach, he  
 “ is actually here, and only waits  
 “ permission to attend you.” —  
 “ Excellent young man !” replied  
 Amelia, “ the goodness of his  
 “ heart, in accompanying you to  
 “ the abode of his greatest enemy,  
 “ assures me of his forgiveness :  
 “ entreat for me his presence, and  
 “ let me indulge my eyes before  
 “ they

“ they close for ever with a brother’s dear surviving image.”—  
 Madame de St. Aubin descended hastily to fetch her son, prepared him for the pity-moving spectacle, and introduced him to his dying aunt. — Amelia had requested to be raised, and supported by her pillows : strong agitations convulsed her frame; and, for a few moments, she was deprived of the power of utterance. An interval of calm succeeded — she extended her emaciated arms.—Augustus, who understood the sign, suffered her to embrace him ; the drops of soft humanity, wrung from his feeling heart, fell upon her cheek. A ghostly smile illumed her haggard  
 eyes

eyes—she loosed her feeble hold—  
 she cast a grateful look to heaven—  
 faintly articulated “ I am forgiven,  
 “ — I am happy ! ” — and, sinking  
 on her pillow, instantly expired.

A scene so mournful, and a death  
 so sudden, awfully affected Mon-  
 sieur and Madame de St. Aubin.  
 Augustus supported his trembling  
 mother, and hurried her from the  
 breathless corse of Amelia. The  
 Count de Senanges felt no less  
 shocked at an event, little expected  
 to take place so soon. The nuns  
 crowded about Madame de St.  
 Aubin, offering her many officious  
 consolations: — the abbess sent her  
 a complimentary message, but was  
 herself too much indisposed to ad-  
 mit.

mit an interview. At length, being tolerably recovered, she was attended to the carriage by her two companions, and set out on her return to Paris.—The spirits of this amiable woman had been so much affected by the penitence and death of a sister, for whom she once felt the tenderest friendship, that she was some time confined to her chamber. There she shed fresh tears to the renewed remembrance of her beloved husband, whose injurious conduct never could erase him from her affections. During this interval, the steward of the late Viscount attended his new lord, who was soon fixed in the secure possession of the inheritance of his ancestors:



ancestors : but he was dead to every pleasure fortune could bestow ; and sighed in the lap of affluence his disappointed love. Deeply, however, as he was sensible of the incurable wound, which, with a slow and baneful poison, undermined his happiness, yet he was true to the sacred ties of honour, and neglected no attentions to a wife who treated him with the coldest indifference and ingratitude. Neither parental authority, nor conjugal affection, could recall the deluded Leonora from the fatal paths of dissipation.—She was still the inseparable companion of Madame de Soissons. — Play consumed their successive nights, and their days  
were

were spent in that disturbed repose which is ever the attendant of late hours, and an incessant round of vanity. But too soon remorseless fate snatched from the world, in her full career of gaiety, this fair votary of pleasure !

YOUTH, BEAUTY, WEALTH, and GREATNESS, all availed not, to rescue from the grave the lovely victim ! Madame de St. Aubin was seized with a malady, which put an early period to her life ! the ninth day, after being attacked with a virulent small-pox, closed in eternal sleep those radiant eyes which had obtained unnumbered conquests. In her intervals of reason the suffering of her body worked

worked the most happy reformation in her mind : they dispelled from her ideas the temptations of a sublunary state—recalled the dormant virtues of her soul, and prepared it for the awful change she was about to make ! The solemn crisis of impending death placed in a far different light those deceptions of vanity and transitory pleasures which had intoxicated her young heart. — The world receded from her view, and she seemed to regret life only as its short remains allowed not sufficient space for her contrition. The ardour of her devotion was exemplary; and her resignation to her fate, from a firm reliance on the mercies of her God,

truly

truly affecting!—She took a tender farewell of her surrounding friends; entreated they would not mourn her loss; but expressed her wishes that, while they generously pardoned all her errors, they rather would rejoice at her removal from a world whose allurements had estranged her heart from those endearing duties and connexions she had so ill requited:—the names of her husband and her father were the last intelligible words she articulated, and Augustus received from her expiring eye the last ray of departing reason.——

This amiable man, whose attentions during her illness, and anxiety for her recovery, could not

have been exceeded even towards the wife of his choice, was sensibly touched by her sudden fate! — With undisssembled tears he mourned her death, and tenderly regretted her premature removal from a world to which she had been too fondly attached! — In contemplating the ghastly form, once glowing with animated beauty, how does the thinking mind moralize upon the vanity of short-lived pleasures! — The grief, the anguish, of the good old Baron, is not to be described: — that parent-heart alone can sympathize with such sensations which has experienced such a loss! — The revival of his daughter's virtues obliterated the impression of her

her failings :—he remembered only the beauties of her form, the graces of her mind ! — nor could all his philosophic resolution support, with fortitude, this unexpected stroke of fortune ! — He felt bereaved of every social joy, the promised comfort of his drooping years ! — deserted and forlorn ! — Thus the fair blooming branches, cropped from the venerable tree, leave its poor trunk, unsheltered, to the rude elements and boisterous tempest ! — Scarce could the gentle force of friendship drag this heart-stricken parent from the deformed remains of what was once his daughter ! — Fixed like a statue, he gazed upon her face ! — then smote his aged

U 2          breast,

breast, and, with a smile of anguish, thus exclaimed —

“ Yes, all-gracious heaven! —  
 “ it is past! — The only tie of na-  
 “ ture, that remained to attach to  
 “ life a poor old man, is now dis-  
 “ solved! — Life has no more a  
 “ charm, nor death a pang, for  
 “ me! — Oh, thou! who lately  
 “ wert so fair, so sweet, so lovely!  
 “ — thou art fled for ever! — the  
 “ ravages of sickness have defaced  
 “ thy beauties, and left thee a  
 “ spectacle of horror! — Oh, my  
 “ child! my child! — I hoped in  
 “ thee to have survived succeeding  
 “ ages! — and to have transmitted  
 “ to a blooming offspring my di-  
 “ vided wealth! — Thou shouldest  
 “ have



“ have closed a father’s eyes ; but  
 “ he, unnatural doom ! was des-  
 “ tined to close thine ! — Yet we  
 “ shall meet again ! — and Heaven,  
 “ in snatching thee so early, has  
 “ shortened our term of separation.

“ Yes, beauteous seraph ! thou  
 “ art only gone before to smoothe  
 “ the rugged path of death, and  
 “ be my gentle herald to a world  
 “ where we shall unite to part no  
 “ more ! ” — Thus did the afflicted  
 parent vent his soul’s anguish ;  
 neither, when borne from this scene  
 of desolation, did his piercing la-  
 mentation cease : — still he addressed  
 the invisible object of his sorrows,  
 till, overwhelmed with grief, he  
 sunk into a silent stupor.

The Marchioness de Soissons, who had so frequently experienced the strong force of Madame de St. Aubin's attachment, now proved the fickleness of her own friendship, and the insensibility of her heart. Though she had long passed the dangerous disorder that had been so fatal to the poor Viscountess, she did not once attempt a personal inquiry or friendly visit.—Sickness and mortality were subjects too serious for her reflections. Devoid of every tender sentiment which melts to sympathy the feeling mind — a friend expiring was to her a friend no more!—Even when informed of Madame de St. Aubin's death at the card-table, she received  
the

the account with savage unconcern, and indifferently said ; “ It is fortunate she did not survive her boasted beauty ; to live, and be a fright, is still more horrible than death itself ! ” — On this unworthy woman had the ill-fated Leonora lavished all her hours ; and, for her sake, estranged herself from real friendship.

With what different sentiments were Julia, Henrietta, and Madame de St. Aubin, inspired ! — Totally as Leonora had neglected them since her introduction to that bane of her happiness, yet their affection for her was undiminished : her danger awakened all their former partiality — they proved the

tendereſt nurſes in her fatal illneſs, and ſcarcely ever quitted her apartment till the laſt ſigh of expiring life ſadly proclaimed their gentle offices no longer neceſſary!—The feeling heart of Julia had watched, with attentive tenderneſs, the progreſs and every turn of this fatal diſtemper; and, touched moſt ſenſibly at Leonora's fate, ſhe mourned her rival's death with all the energy of friendſhip.

Scarce were Madame de St. Aubin's eyes cloſed for ever, ere ſhe felt the propriety of removing from a manſion where the newly-acquired freedom of a lover might expoſe her to a renewal of thoſe attentions which delicacy and prudence diſ-

allowed

allowed at this juncture as forcibly as ever.—She would not trust herself to behold the first emotions of that regret she knew the generous heart of Augustus must experience when he was convinced that hope was fled, and his unfortunate wife no more!—She left him to the consolation of his surrounding friends; and, in the midst of the general grief and consternation, passed unobserved to the carriage that waited for her; and returned home to indulge, in solitude, those tears which were due to the memory of a departed friend!—When the remaining mourners were collected around the afflicted husband and distracted father, the eyes of the former vainly



vainly and involuntarily fought for that dear object, whose influence alone could soothe a distress which derived its source rather from sympathetic pity than affection. Sensible of the cold indifference with which he had been long regarded by his misguided wife, he had not the aggravation of accusing conscience to enhance his sorrow — his regret was unattended by the sting of remorse — he sighed the untimely fate of youth and beauty — he wept her sufferings — but the restoration of his liberty shed an imperceptible sweetness over his grief, which rendered it supportable. — Julia was absent; but her loved idea mingled with that of the breathless Leonora;

nora ;—he judged the delicate motive of her departure, and approved the conduct that mortified his wishes. — To the heart-struck father this amiable son now turned all his attention — he approached the venerable mourner — for some moments silence prevailed — grief melted in the eloquent eyes of Augustus — the Baron pressed him in his arms ! — “ Ah ! ” cried he, in a tremulous voice, “ did I presume  
 “ to accuse Omnipotence of being  
 “ totally bereft ! — Ungrateful parent !—thou hast still a child !—  
 “ dear relict of my Leonora ! —  
 “ come to my heart, and share it  
 “ with her memory ! ”

It



It was recommended to Monsieur de St. Aubin, by his friends, to remove the Baron, as soon as possible, from a habitation which daily renewed and fed his anguish. The hotel of the late Viscount was now ready to receive him; yet it was not without difficulty Monsieur de Neuville could be persuaded to change his abode.—Julia observed a strict retirement at home, and never saw Augustus but at the house of her brother: and there she studiously avoided every opportunity of finding herself an instant alone with him:—her penetrating lover observed and secretly reproached her cruelty:—his passion, no longer restrained by the ties of duty, was determined

determined to surmount every perplexing obstacle of feminine decorum; resolving, in defiance of its rigid dictates, to assert his former claims; and plead the cause of love.

One day, when all, excepting the Marchioness, were assembled at the Viscount's, he stole unperceived away, and flew to the Hotel de Senanges, informing the porter he had brought a message to Madame de Soissons — he waited not to be announced, but hastily ascended the staircase: he traversed the gallery that led to her dressing-room; and, when he reached the antichamber, he stopped for a few moments, to recover from the perturbation of his spirits, before he could assume  
courage

courage to appear in the dreaded presence of his Julia: he stood irresolute whether to advance or to retreat.— Hope at length prevailed over his timidity, and he gently tapped at the door: — a silver voice sweetly commanded him to enter; — with trembling emotion he turned the obedient lock — the spring flew open at his touch, and discovered the object of his adoration employed in shading some beautiful embroidery. The needle dropped from her fair fingers — she started up — her cheek was overspread with sudden blushes! — Surprise and displeasure animated her countenance, and perplexed her bosom: in an instant Augustus was at her feet —

“ Forgive,

“ Forgive, my adorable Julia,” he  
 cried, “ the presumption of a man  
 “ who cannot exist without be-  
 “ holding you !” — “ And is it  
 “ thus,” interrupted the Marchio-  
 ness haughtily, “ my privacy is to be  
 “ interrupted ?—what privilege en-  
 “ titles the Viscount de St. Aubin  
 “ to invade a solitude which is my  
 “ choice, and should be sacred ?” —  
 “ The privilege of truth and love !”  
 replied he. — “ Nay, frown not,  
 “ loveliest of women ! — obscure  
 “ not the heavenly beauties of that  
 “ brow by killing scorn ! — but  
 “ listen, with gracious pity, to a  
 “ suit which claims at least the at-  
 “ tention of my Julia—alone con-  
 “ sent to hear me—and I will obey  
 “ your

“ your cruel doom, and instantly  
 “ retire, if you command it ! ” —  
 She was distressed — a look of irre-  
 solute tendernefs and sorrow encour-  
 aged him to proceed — “ Ah ! can  
 “ those sentiments with which I  
 “ once was honoured be effaced ? —  
 “ Is there no pleader in a heart  
 “ which was acknowledged mine  
 “ by every tie of sympathy ? — No  
 “ longer can you coldly urge the  
 “ claims of duty — implicitly have  
 “ we both obeyed its tyrant dic-  
 “ tates — they are now dissolved —  
 “ restored to mutual freedom, our  
 “ plighted hands are free to form  
 “ the union which fate has hi-  
 “ therto so cruelly obstructed. —  
 “ Ah, Julia ! — thou art silent ! —  
 “ thy

“ thy averted eyes, and that fore-  
 “ boding sigh, plant daggers in  
 “ my breast! — It is past! — I am  
 “ forgotten! — thy faithless heart,  
 “ and thy perfidious hand, re-  
 “ nounce me! — Inconstant Julia—  
 “ wretched—wronged Augustus!”

“ Ah, barbarous man!” uttered  
 the Marchioness, bursting into  
 tears—“ how have I merited these  
 “ reproaches?—My heart, incapa-  
 “ ble of change, refused its ten-  
 “ derest affections to a husband  
 “ worthy of them; substituting  
 “ cold gratitude in return for  
 “ generous love: and, ere the  
 “ mournful tributes due to his  
 “ honoured memory are paid, my  
 “ ears are wounded with unhal-  
 VOL. II. X “ lowed

“ lowed passion, and the ill-timed  
 “ upbraiding of an ungrateful  
 “ lover!—Ah, Augustus! where is  
 “ that sensibility, where that deli-  
 “ cacy of sentiment, which first  
 “ impressed the heart of Julia?—  
 “ Scarce is thy Leonora cold in  
 “ earth, ere thou hast suffered thy  
 “ newly absolved vows to breathe  
 “ their falsehood in a widowed  
 “ ear!”—She moved with emotion  
 to the window; he still continued  
 on his knees, and thus addressed  
 her — “ Hear me, thou soul of all  
 “ my hopes and wishes!—Pardon  
 “ the mad presumption of a lover  
 “ urged by the frenzy of despairing  
 “ passion!—Never will I profane  
 “ again thy charming constancy  
 “ by



“ by one reproach.—Oh, pity and  
 “ forgive a wretch, who long has  
 “ been the sport of fortune. Torn  
 “ from my arms, even when trea-  
 “ cherous fate seemed ready to  
 “ unite us, I dread a second se-  
 “ paration!—Shunned by the ob-  
 “ ject whom my heart adores, pro-  
 “ phetic fears have agonized my  
 “ mind!—but I should have known  
 “ the soul of Julia incapable of  
 “ perfidy!—Come then, inspiring  
 “ hope, soft peace, and animating  
 “ joy! — sweet soothers of the  
 “ pangs of timid love! — Far be  
 “ the presumption from me to re-  
 “ quest thy hand, till thou hast  
 “ sacrificed to customary forms the  
 “ stated time! — Sacred to the me-

X 2

“ mory

“ mory of that exalted man, by  
 “ every due respect ! But ah, my  
 “ Julia ! can the most rigid virtue  
 “ deny one gracious smile — one  
 “ blest assurance that I yet am dear  
 “ to her who reigns triumphant in  
 “ my faithful breast ? ” —

She turned to him ; — a look of  
 ineffable sweetness arrayed her  
 countenance, a beam of radiance  
 brightened her tear-full eye. —  
 Extending her hand with an in-  
 expressible grace, which dimi-  
 nished not that modest dignity  
 inseparable from all her actions —  
 “ Receive once more,” said she,  
 “ most amiable of men, the faith-  
 “ ful vows of Julia : — they are  
 “ thine by merit and by right. —  
 “ I disclaim

“ I disclaim deceit and affectation,  
 “ as arts unworthy of us both.—  
 “ When, therefore, these sable en-  
 “ signs of unfeigned regret shall  
 “ have fulfilled their tributary tes-  
 “ timonies of gratitude to the re-  
 “ membrance of a husband, no  
 “ longer will I oppose the suit of  
 “ constancy and love.” — The  
 transported Augustus received with  
 rapture so charming a confession :  
 “ Propitious founts,” he cried,  
 “ of promised bliss ! Oh, happiest  
 “ moment of relenting fate ! never  
 “ till now did my adoring heart  
 “ a joy experience unallayed by  
 “ pain.—Thou art then mine—ec-  
 “ static thought !—by vows irrevocably  
 “ breathed from thine own  
 X 3      “ generous,

“ generous, all-persuasive lips ; and  
 “ pitying Heaven permits and rati-  
 “ fies the promised union, so long,  
 “ so cruelly protracted !” — Glow-  
 ing with soft confusion, Julia be-  
 held the transports of Augustus ;  
 and, gently checking them by an  
 awful beam from her expressive  
 eye, she, with her wonted delicacy,  
 requested him to quit her, and to  
 conform to her irrevocable law,  
 which permitted her not to receive  
 his private visits. He promised  
 perfect submission to her com-  
 mands ; and, satisfied with her  
 generous avowal, he reluctantly  
 withdrew, and returned to his hotel  
 before he had been missed by the  
 family party he had left.

When

When the Marchioness found herself alone, she fell into the most pleasing train of reflections she had been capable of indulging since she had compelled herself to act in obedience to a father. — She had at once the sweet consciousness of having supported a blameless conduct as a wife and daughter ; and the delightful prospect of rewarding a lover's constancy, by uniting herself to the early object of her affections.—She was agreeably absorbed in the soothing indulgence of these sweet ideas, when Madame de St. Aubin and her sister returned home. An air of soft serenity overspread her countenance, and

her eyes beamed with unusual animation.

“ Your silent contemplations,  
 “ my dear Julia,” said the Countess, “ must have been very pleasing ; and if you would not chide  
 “ me for my observation” (with an arch smile) “ I could affirm that  
 “ there is a sympathy between the  
 “ souls of absent lovers. Augustus  
 “ has at this moment an expression  
 “ in his looks which bespeaks a  
 “ heart at ease :—the gloom of inquietude has forsaken his brow,  
 “ and on your’s I trace no longer  
 “ penfive sadness : — some magic  
 “ spirit has inspired you both.”  
 Julia’s check was tinged with conscious

fcious blushes — “ Ah,” cried she,  
 in an embarrassed accent, “ Augus-  
 “ tus has betrayed me — such are  
 “ the arts of false dissembling man!  
 “ — give but a lover hope, and  
 “ caution is no more. He intruded  
 “ into my presence—upbraided me  
 “ with cruelty—sighed—entreated,  
 “ wept,—by the soft wiles of pity-  
 “ moving love melted my easy  
 “ heart to weakness : and, when  
 “ compassionating his sufferings I  
 “ deigned to promise him my  
 “ plighted hand, as the just recom-  
 “ pense of long-tried faith, he dis-  
 “ honourably boasts in my extorted  
 “ vows the triumph he has gained :  
 “ — but he shall feel the force of  
 “ my revenge.” — Half serious,  
 half



half smiling, she concluded these words, the Countess looking significantly at Madame de St. Aubin, “ Ah, Madam,” said she, “ have we not made an interesting discovery ? — No, my charming sister, you are your own betrayer ; Augustus kept to himself his hoarded joy, nor profaned the sacred confidence you had reposed in him.” — The confusion of the Marchioness prevented her replying to the raillery of her delighted sister. The Count de Senanges, upon his entrance, was soon made acquainted with the subject of their conversation, and the little incident which had occasioned it. He told the Marchioness that she

had

had sacrificed her sentiments too long to a decorum, which even the exalted delicacy of *her* character did not require, as her former engagements with his friend might have claimed an earlier confession of her unshaken faith to so amiable, so constant a lover. Julia suffered herself to be convinced by these persuasive arguments; and permitted her Augustus to indulge with less restraint the flattering hopes of his approaching happiness. Some months elapsed in this situation; and the period of the lovely widow's mourning drew near. The enraptured St. Aubin beheld its advance with all the enthusiasm of love: Monsieur de Neuville,

Neuville, who felt for him the tenderest affection, began to wish that he might see this amiable son happily engaged in a second union, before he himself was summoned to pay the expected debt of Nature. Augustus had long meditated an avowal of his former passion for the Marchioness; yet the delicacy of his regard to the memory of Leonora constantly opposed the disclosure of his sentiments to her respected father. Monsieur de Senanges would have undertaken the friendly office of divulging a circumstance that could not but be painfully repugnant to the sensibility of the Viscount; but he considered it as absolutely incumbent  
on

on his honour to unfold himself the confidential secret. Week after week elapsed before he could assume resolution to introduce a subject which must renew the sad remembrance of Leonora's fate : but an opportunity at length offered itself for this desired yet dreaded eclaireissement. The Baron was one day gratefully acknowledging the attentions of Monsieur de St. Aubin—" I feel for you, Augustus," said the good old man, " the same  
 " degree of parental regard as if  
 " Nature had formed you mine :—  
 " equally interested in your hap-  
 " pinefs, as if I could claim the  
 " honour of your birth, it is the  
 " dearest object of my heart to see  
 " you

“ you united to a woman worthy  
 “ of you : enough have you sacri-  
 “ ficed to the memory of my poor  
 “ departed child ; — it pleased  
 “ Heaven to snatch her from your  
 “ arms, even in the dawn of mar-  
 “ riage. — But for virtues such as  
 “ your’s Providence has still in store  
 “ a sweet reward in some fair part-  
 “ ner of your cares.—Few indeed  
 “ have merits equal to your own ;  
 “ but, would you allow an old  
 “ man’s judgment, I could point  
 “ out *one* lovely woman in whom  
 “ is centered every feminine per-  
 “ fection. — Julia de Soiffons has  
 “ a form charming as beauty’s  
 “ self, and a mind replete with  
 “ every excellence. I have traced  
 “ her

“ her exalted conduct in the sepa-  
 “ rate characters of daughter,—  
 “ wife,—and widow:—in the *first*  
 “ I am not ignorant that she sacri-  
 “ ficed the tenderest attachment,  
 “ in obedience to a father, who  
 “ blushed not to unite her bloom  
 “ with age. In the *second* how  
 “ conspicuously shone her exem-  
 “ plary conduct!—in the *last* how  
 “ has she, by the strict retirement  
 “ she has observed, at a season, and  
 “ in a situation, so seducing to  
 “ youth, rank, and beauty, proved  
 “ the most delicate respect to the  
 “ memory of her husband!—You  
 “ are worthy of each other. Speak,  
 “ my Augustus, are you sufficiently  
 “ sensible

“ sensible of such attractions to  
“ offer her your hand and heart ?”

“ —Ah, Sir,” replied the Viscount,  
agitated with a variety of strong  
emotions — “ your tender interest  
“ in my happiness demands and  
“ merits all my confidence !—My  
“ heart is opening to your view ;  
“ and the impartial confession I  
“ am going to make will soon con-  
“ vince you how little difficulty  
“ will be found in my compliance.”

He then in few words related to  
the Baron the commencement,  
progress, and disappointment, of  
his passion for the Marchioness.  
The amiable father applauded his  
ingenuity, and assured him that  
his



his merits were, if possible, greatly raised in his opinion from the tenderness he had shewn to Leonora, who he never suspected had not been the first and *only* object of his choice. — He had indirectly heard the affections of Julia were engaged before her reluctant marriage with the Marquis, but had never arrived at the name of her acknowledged lover.

The Baron, delighting in the prospect of seeing two such matchless characters united, requested that he might be indulged with the distinction of presenting the hand of the incomparable Julia to her beloved Augustus ; which having done, he should then sink to that

grave in peace that would rejoin him to his lamented child !

The exemplary conduct of the Marchioness, even to the last instance, remembered the dictates of filial duty ; nor would she form even a second engagement without the sanction of a father. Her application was crowned with the success she wished ;—it followed him to the court of Spain :—but the Duke de Gramont, impregnable to the softer feelings of human nature, expressed no interest in the happiness of his charming daughter. The total indifference he had shewn for Julia, ever since her birth, continued, even after her union with the Marquis ;  
and

and he had neglected inquiries of her welfare since his decease.—He now yielded a cold approbation; adding that she was for the future at liberty to rule her own conduct, without any reference to him.—Every obstacle being now removed, and propriety no longer opposing the wishes of Augustus, Julia consented to bestow upon her faithful lover the invaluable hand which was destined to complete his bliss. The recompense of persevering virtue crowned their faithful loves:—the softest chain of Hymen wove the indissoluble knot!—They who had combated so nobly with adversity, and sacrificed to honour the tenderest of passions, were capable

pable of tasting, from the refinement of their sentiments, the most sublime delight that springs from mutual constancy !

Thus did this incomparable pair exhibit to the world an example of happiness unequalled by the most celebrated patterns of conjugal union, immortalized in the long annals of recorded TIME !

T H E E N D.

## ERRATA IN VOL. II.

Page	Line	
38	1	<i>for in different read indifferent.</i>
50	11	<i>for borne read born.</i>
58	10	<i>for confidante read confidant,</i>
102	7	<i>for inconstand read inconstant.</i>
124	14	<i>for dependent read dependant.</i>
152	8	<i>for preferred read prefered.</i>
198	1	<i>insert were after eyes.</i>
204	12	<i>for she read he.</i>
235	19	<i>omit an l in allienate.</i>
240	18	<i>omit the e in immovable.</i>
243	3	<i>read I prefer for is free.</i>
287	14	<i>and 15 for being attacked with read the attack of.</i>
317	8	<i>omit the first c in eclaireissement.</i>

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